SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, I beg to present the Eleventh Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

16.46 hrs.

RALWAY BUDGET — 1997-98
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT — (RAILWAYS) - 1997-98
DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS — (RAILWAYS) 1994-95
DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS — (RAILWAYS) 1996-97 — *Contd.*

[English]

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY (Nizamabad) : Thank you, Madam, for giving me this opportunity.

I rise to take part in the General Discussion on the Railway Budget for 1997-98, the Supplementary Budget for 1996-97 and the Demands for Excess Grants for Railways. I do hail from the Nizamabad constituency of Andhra Pradesh which has been a backward district in the Telangana region and which has been neglected by the State Government and, to a certain extent, by the Central Government. Moreover, it has been infested with the Naxallites. It has been lagging behind for years in all aspects like the educational aspects or industrial aspects. It has been prospering in only one sector and that is the commercial crop and trading business. In that context, the transportation and communications become a must. For the past many years, particularly the Railway services have been lagging in my district. The Railway Ministry has sixteen lakh employees and operates 7,500 passenger trains a day and carries eleven million passengers which accumulates up to almost 20 per cent of the passenger load. In addition, it carries more than 425 tonnes of freight every day.

Because of the time constraint, I am not going into the laurels, praises, good things, bad things, merits and demerits of the Budget about which many of my elders, including yourself Madam, I believe, had spoken. But, certainly, I do have to be candid in my discussion and make a few points. It is the perception of the people in this country today that they say that the Budget has been an inflammatory Budget and secondly the Budget has a discriminatory factor in that. They say that the Budget has mostly favoured Karnataka State and Bihar. It is very much evident from the fact that many of the States M.Ps. went outside and stood in front of the Parliament House and somehow, with the conciliatory effort of our hon. Minister of Railways, he could convince some of them. Only the results in the future will tell whether he satisfied them in a constructive way or not.

In this Budget he proposed a 12 per cent hike in the freight rate and 10 per cent hike in passenger fares as far as the upper classes are concerned and five per cent for sleeper class passengers and 20 per cent surcharge has been levied on movement of parcels in superfast trains.

Our hon. Minister of Railways has described these as, let me quote, "modest and selective". While presenting his maiden Budget on 16th of July, 1996, he had done a similar thing. A ten per cent increase in freight and fares of upper classes was effected and he described it, let me quote again, as "modest and selective adjustment in fare and freight rates".

These deteriorating financial conditions are reflected in this Budget. The per cent ratio of net revenue to the capital has been declining for the last 50 years from 12.2 to 8.9. If this trend continues, it will not be too long before the Railways could become bankrupt. Let me give you a few allocations because the promises tried to please every Member here and to some extent a great per cent of the people of this country itself. Let me give few examples.

For the purpose of gauge conversion or unification, Rs. 996 crore have been provided this year while Rs. 1,021 crore had been provided last year. There is a decline in that aspect. This year Rs. 178 crore have been allocated for doubling of lines while it was Rs. 206 crore last year. There is a decline in that aspect also. For the purpose of computerisation, Rs. 62 crore were provided last year while Rs. 35 crore have been provided this year. By decreasing these allocations, it is not possible to achieve what the Minister of Railways is hoping to achieve neither he is going to fulfil all the pending projects. The hon. Minister of Railways needs more than Rs. 20,000 crore to achieve that. In his Budget Speech, he has not elaborated a single point to convince us the mobilisation of the sources of this money.

As we know, the Railways carries more than 40 per cent of our passengers. I could go on and on but because of the time constraint and looking at your pleasant smile which is giving an indication to me to conclude, I will confine myself to my constituency.

As I said, my constituency, Nizamabad is in Telangana region. All alone, since I became a Member of Parliament for the first time, I have been insisting on the Railway authorities for the conversions of one line, that is, Mudikhed (Maharashtra)-Nizamabad line. This is an 88 Km line and the survey is almost finished. I hope that the hon. Minister would allocate good funds and not just 'funds' because my colleague sitting beside me here hails from Karim Nagar district knows it. The Karim Nagar-Peddapalli-Nizamabad line is about 177 Km long. The total anticipated cost of that project is Rs. 192.22,68,000. So far as 1996-97 is concerned, Rs. 12.70 crore have been spent. This year, there is an allocation of Rs. 5 crore only. With this meagre amount of Rs. 5 crore, it would be very much tough for this on-going project to be completed because time escalation

[Shri G.A. Charan Reddy]

would come into the picture. Probably down the road, by the time the project is finished, it might take more than 40 years! As you know, the inflation factor would increase by three or four times in 40 years.

There are other things which may look small from the point of view of the hon. Minister, but from the point of view of people of my constituency, these are big issues. I request the Minister of Railways to provide in my constituency, Nizamabad town proper, two foot overbridges at both the ends, Cabin 'A' and Cabin 'B', for the use of public as people are finding it very difficult to cross the tracks.

Presently, there are only 250 quarters for the staff of Railways at Nizamabad. I have been to that area and they are a must; I request him to construct another 250 quarters for the staff. It is not for me but for the staff of the Railways itself. The most important thing that I would like to emphasise is that the height of the platform at Nizamabad broad gauge line should be raised since for the people with luggage, and particularly for the old people, it is becoming very tough to alight without somebody's help. More than that, I am ashamed to say that the entire railway building is in a very pathetic condition and I do not think that at any time in the last 20 years, any money for its renovation had been allocated. In front of the railway station itself, it is not a walkable place. Unfortunately, I never had a chance to travel by train in the last 25 years in my constituency, but this is what passengers of my area tell me.

There are a few requests I have made in writing to the Minister of Railways, but so far I have not had a promising reply or for that matter, any reply. I have asked that train numbers 594 and 593 may be extended up to Bodhan.

No reply has been given to this point.

Then in my Assembly Constituency, Dichpally which is the Mandal Headquarters, the fast train does not stop there. It must stop because this Headquarters is also the headquarter for the 7th Battalion of Police.

Then on 19th September also I sent a letter to the Divisional Manager asking for the shuttle train between Nizamabad to Kamareddy. Its timings have to be changed because there is no service train between 1530 hours to 2130 hours from Kamareddy to Nizamabad. I would appreciate if you look into it and give consideration to it.

There are many small things which I do not want to mention. I could see the hon. Minister, Shri Satpalji Maharaj, and could get a feeling that he might give a consideration for the small money.

Madam, I know there is time constraint. But finally, I do want to re-emphasize again my biggest and the single most concern and hope that he would allocate sufficient funds for the conversion of line from Mudkhed in Maharashtra to Nizamabad which has been in unification process.

I do compliment the hon. Minister for presenting this Budget.

With that, I thank you for giving me time to complete even though there was time constraint.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Chairman, Sir, initiating the discussion on the railway budget our colleague Shri Pramod Mahajan draw the attention of the house as many issues and opposed the like of 12 percent in the freight rates in the railway budget. He gave many suggestions on several issues such as how to improve the operation of the trains throughout in the country which are the challenges before the Railways and how can its condition be improved. I associate myself with all his views and keeping in view of the time constraint. I would like to express my views particularly regarding Mumbai suburban trains.

When Hon'ble Railway Minister was reading his budget speech here, commuters of suburban trains heaved a sign of relief for a moment as the fores of Suburban trains were not increased by him. But any new project regarding Mumbai Suburban railway service has not been includes in it hence that sign of relief proved only momentary. In the light of the above relief I would like to make a few points.

In India one crore and ten lakhs people travel by train daily out of them 50 percent i.e. 55 lakhs people travel by suburban trains daily in Mumbai city alone 14 lakhs people in Calcutta and five and half lakhs people in Chennai or Madras thus making up a total of 74 lakh 50 thousand commuters.

Mumbai is the economic Capital of India. This economic capital fetches money in huge sums not just for the Mumbai city alone but for the country as whole. Keeping this in view Mumbai Suburban train service should be improved. I have been making this demand in the house for the last 7 years. Presently the railway budget in the house Railway Minister Shri Suresh Kalmadi had said that Mumbai had been neglected much till date but the year of 1996 would be observed as 'Mumbai Suburban year' under which we will try to improve the facilities to Suburban travellers in Mumbai. Under paragraph 1.2 of the Action Plan Mumbai-2001' published by Railway Ministry it has ben stated :

[English]

> "Mumbai's contribution to economic growth has been significant. It accounts for 33 per cent of country's income tax, 60 per cent of customs duty, 20 per cent of the central excise, accommodates 4.6 per cent of India's urban population and generates 10 per cent of the country's industrial jobs.

17.00 hrs.

Mumbai Port handles 17 per cent of India's maritime trade, and the Mumbai Airport handles 49 per cent and 42 per cent of the international and national air passenger traffic respectively."

[Translation]

Mumbai makes such contributes in the industrial and economic development of the country.

I would like that Minister of State for Railways and Shri Satpal Maharaj should pay his attention towards my speech also. Suburban railway is considered as the life line of Mumbai. At the same time it fetches the Union Government huge revenues from here Union Government and State Government treat Mumbai as revenue earning city. All people earn money from Mumbai.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI (Ghosi) : Do they not provide to Mumbai?

SHRI RAM NAIK : Railways does not provide funds. Due to not providing funds for the development of Suburban railway in Mumbai, today 4500 people have to travel standing whereas there is scope for only 2700 people to travel like this. In Mumbai today the position is this that 10 persons have to stand within an area of one square metre. Rules have been prescribed for carrying horses, so many meters to be provided definitely and if this is not done cows and goats in wagons if these rules are not followed the suit is filed against the railways but in Mumbai a common mass has no importance.

Madam, when Suresh Kalmadi ji was Railways Minister, he had formulated 'Action Plan Mumbai 2001, and wherein there was mention of funds to be provided for Mumbai and the way in which the development of Mumbai Suburban trains was to be done but nothing happened. New Government came into power. It had presented its budget last year we taught that being new this Government had presented the budget in haste. But this year also nothing has been provided. The members of Parliament from Mumbai, the officers of railway board and Chief Minister of Maharashtra had six meetings in all with the hon'ble Minister, we thought that this time something would be provided for the development of Suburban Railways of Mumbai but we got nothing. There is a proverb in Marathi -

'Angar Pokhrun undir Nichala'

That is much cry and little wool. I thought that my Hindi might not be good so I asked my daughter to cite a better proverbs for it but she gave even lesser importance to this issue.

So, the daily commuters of Mumbai are angry over it. They are agitated. It is like adding insult to injury. If you travel in those sub-urban trains for two days, you would get acquinted with the condition of the commuters there and they travel in trains to go to their place of work in factories or offices. They contribute their might to the production of the country and if their voice is not heard, whose voice would be heard will they have to adopt other methods. Will they have to burn the trains to get their genuine demands fulfilled? Would you not pay any heal to their warning?

SHRI KALPNATH RAI : Why the trains of Mumbai have been running in loss?

SHRI RAM NAIK : I will come to that. Perhaps it is because the people of Mumbai have elected six members of parliament of BJP and Siv Sena and the State Government is also of BJP, Shiv Sena combine. In the recently concluded Metro politan Council elections, power has gone to BJP and Shiv Sena combine? Are you angry due to the fact that you have suffered defeat there? Do you want to take revenge?

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : Not at all.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Rai you have asked as to why the trains of Mumbai have been running in loss. I want to tell you that as far the statistics of the Ministry of railway for the year 1995-96, 54 lac rail commuters travel in Mumbai daily and a profit of Rs. 91.40 crore was earned. These are figures for the year 1995-96. In the latest figures the profits must be more. Calcutta where there are 14 lac commuters the loss is to the tune of Rs. 254.28 crores.

In Channai where there are only 5.5, lac commuters, the loss is Rs. 60.69 lacs. In my opinion it is not justified to do such in justice Mumbai which gives profit. What has the Government done in this regard? There is not a single project. I want to draw your attention to para 58 of the Budget speech of the Minister of Railways. You can find out what is there in it for Mumbai. I quote para 58 :

> "Mr. Speaker, the House is aware that various measures are being taken to improve the suburban services in Mumbai area. Some new projects have also been identified for being taken up to improve the services. Rail India Techno Economic Services have been commissioned to undertake detailed studies for laying of fifth-sixth lines from Mumbai Central to Borivali on Western Railway and fifth and sixth line from Mumbai CST to Kurla on Central Railway. Some more works have also been identified for inclusion in the Mumbai vrban Transport Project-II. Studies are in progress in four different areas to find solution to the problems being faced by suburban passengers."

What is there in it? So, it is but natural that the people of Mumbai are agitated...*(Interruptions)* I will conclude my speech in five minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I was asking you as to how much more time you would take.

SHRI RAM NAIK : I will take five minutes more. Very little has been provided for the on-going projects. Provision of Rs. 327.27 crores has been made for Boriville-river quadruplicate. This year only Rs. 9.99 crores out of the total expenditure has been provided. It is not even 10 crores. The second big project is for double line from Kurla Mankhurd to Bekapur which is estimated at Rs. 179 crores provided only Rs. 20 lakhs have been provided for it. Not even a rupee has been provided for Purlet-thane fifth and sixth line which involves Rs. 271 crores. Rs. 87 Lacs have been provided for Mumbai Division conversion from AC to DC track which involves an expenditure of Rs. 549 crores. It is not even one crore. Similarly, the expediture for Churehgate river AC to DC track conversion is Rs. 185 crores. The Government has provided Rs. 2 crores. In this way this work would not be completed even in the next 10 years. The present population of Mumbai is 1 crore and 10 lacs and if we include the population of Thane, Vallad Ambarnath etc. it is about 2 crores. It would be about 3 crores in the next 5 years. The trains would not be sufficient for that.

Therefore, I urge upon you to increase the provision made. I know that there is the shortage of funds. This plea is taken repeatedly. I would like to make fair suggestion in regard to funds and with that I would conclude my speech.

I had said last year that BOLT scheme would not be successful. Three projects were given under BOLT scheme in Mumbai, Boravili, Virar, Davavsai and Diva panmel. The Government did not receive any tender for these projects. Two years have passed. Now nobody is prepared to take any project of Mumbai under BOLT. Who would come in Assam and Kashmir? Please don't go ahead with the scheme of providing rail tracks on the BOLT basis. Resources will not be generated through this scheme.

To generate resources an independent corporation should be created for Mumbai suburban trains. I will not say that the Minister of Railways belongs to Bihar, so he has created a new division in Bihar. Can you not sanction a new division in Mumbai where there are 55 lakhs commuters? Please make a separate independent autonomous corporation for suburban railways. People came forward to purchase Konkan Railway Bonds for Konkan Railway Corporation. If the Government make such corporation in Mumbai and floats Mumbai suburban Bonds. The people of Mumbai would purchase these bonds and provide necessary funds to the Government. I can assure the Government on behalf of the people of Mumbai. This is one way. The second way, which has been discussed here is that Railways has a large track of surplus land in Mumbai. Rs. 20000 crores can be mobilised through it. These statistics have been even by the Government Section. If the Government take such a decision something can be done. This proposal has been lying pending with the Union Cabinet and we are tired of hearing it that it is lying pending with the Union Government. If the these projects regarding the use of surplus land, which have been pending with the Union Government, are cleared, the Government can mobilise as much many as it desires.

The third point is regarding taking funds from Urban Development Ministry. Nothing is being done in that regard and therefore, this is again with the Ministry of Railways.

The final point is regarding Mumbai suburban Transport Project-II which is a big project of Rs. 4000 crores. It has been discussed for the last seven years. The World Bank is not providing loan. So, please shelve this project. Nothing is happening by saying every time that M.U.T.P.-II, M.U.Y. P-II. Besides, the line from Church gate to Virar-has been extended upto Dahanu. Now, you have increased the area upto Rahanu, the Government has provided for a signalling project involving an expenditure of Rs. 25 crores for that in this Budget and only Rs. one lakh have been provided for that. So, something should be done for ensuring the timely completion of this work. The last suggestion is this that at our instance, some trains of 12 bogies have been started. Some of these trains run from Church gate to Virar and from Chhatarpati Shivaji Terminal to Kalyan. If all the trains from Chhatrapati Shivaji terminal to Thane are run with 12 bogies, people would benefit a lot. Mr. Chairman, Sir, keeping all these things in view, it is requested that a categorical reply in this regard may be given. Otherwise it is to be seen how the common people of Mumbai who are agitated will be pacified by them.

I would finish my speech after submitting about Konkan Railways in a minute. Konkan Railway would be successful. We name this picture in our minds. Konkan Railway Corporation has done well. We congratulate them. Two trains have started. My friends of Shiv Sena have also suggested in this regard that these trains do not start from that area where Marathi speaking Konkans live. It starts from Kurla. If you start the train from Dadar instead of Kurla the people would be more benefitted. If the hon. Minister does not reply specifically in this regard, people would start mass-movement in this regard. The hon. Minister should fulfil their genuine demands in order to avoid that mess agitation. The names of two trains are discussed here frequently. Konkan is the land of barbuban, so, one train should be named "Parsuram Express" and the other trains should be named "Konkan Ki Rani" as is 'Deccan Queen'. Which runs from Mumbai to Pune. In this may Konkan Railway would be more closer to the Konkan people. Other points raised here may also be replied to.

With these words, I thank you.

*SHRIMATI SANDHYA BAURI (Vishnupur) : Madam Chairperson, at the outset I express my gratitude and

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Bengali.

thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the Railway Budget. After supporting the Railway Budget, I also thank the Hon. Railway Minister for presenting the commendable Railway Budget where he has spared the already hard-pressed common people by not increasing the fare in ordinary Class. On behalf of the common people I heartily thank the Railway Minister for his concern for the poor ordinary passengers.

Madam, I would like to raise a few issues regarding Railway Budget. Some speakers from our party have already expressed their views regarding Budget. I would like to submit certain difficulties faced by the people from my constituency.

I have come from Vishnupur in Bankura district. Most of my colleagues are not aware of the hardships and difficulties faced by the people of my district. That is why, Madam, through you, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Railway Minister these difficulties so that appropriate actions may be initiated.

Madam, you will be surprised to know that only two trains from Bankura run for Calcutta :

(1) Purulia Express starts from Bankura for Calcutta in the morning.

(2) Another train Howrah-Chakradharpur-Bokaro Express starts from Bankura at 12 O'clock in the night.

Commuting from Bankura to Howrah is very essential for various governmental, official, legal work, studies, business purpose and medical treatment. So the demand of the people of my district Bankura is to start a fast passenger train immediately from Bankura. Purulia Express never funs on time and people go on waiting for that single train. Moreover, the train runs so late that one is never sure of reaching Calcutta in time. The fare from Bankura to Howrah by Purulia Express is Rs. 57. For ordinary passenger this amount is difficult to afford. So many people have no other option but to travel by very crowded night service bus. Since these buses are very crowded, people travel even on the top of the bus resulting in accidents. So, we want that immediately fast passenger train must start from this area. The timing should be 5.30 A.M. departure from Bankura and 6.30 P.M. from Howrah. The distance between Bankura and Howrah is 231 km and the introduction of this new train will save both time and money of ordinary passengers.

Apart from these two trains i.e. Purulia Express and Howrah-Chakradharpur-Bokaro Express, we have some local trains like Bankura Adra, Kharagpur and Bankura Midnapore. Since the distance from Bankura to Howrah is 231 km, these trains take almost 8 to 10 hours to reach Howrah. People with limited means cannot afford to stay for a long time in Calcutta. They want to come back as soon as their work is over. Keeping this in view, through you, I again request the Hon. Railway Minister to consider the genuine difficulties faced by the people and start fast passenger train as early as possible.

Moreover I would like to bring another long standing issue that has been agitating the people of this area. In fact they have already started agitation for their grievance. They are agitated because Bankura Damodar River train has not been functioning since long. This train from Bankura used to run through the remote rural areas of Burdhwan. Various meetings were held in the past with the Railway Minister to start this train again. It may be mentioned that there were expectations to convert the metre gauge line to broad gauge and to connect it with Durgapur. But we are highly disappointed that nothing has been mentioned in the Railway Budget in this direction.

Bankura mainly depends on agriculture and due to active co-operation of the Left Front Government the previous draught prone areas are now producing good foodgrains. But due to lack of transport facility and railway link, marketing or preserving in godowns of the grains is not possible. So the small farmers are at the receiving end. Besides many people from South Bankura come to Burdhwan for livelihood. This train was very important for them also. Through you, Madam, I draw the kind attention of the Hon. Railway Minister, to consider the inconveniences faced by the people of Bankura and urge upon him to do the needful.

Moreover I must draw your attention to another important issue. Bankura is famous for its Cottage industry like potteries, terra-cotta articles like much sought after famous horse of Bankura and Dokra articles. These products are made in the small hamlets of Bankura villages. Due to lack of railway link and transport facility, the villagers cannot have access to good markets and they have to sell their articles through the middlemen at a very nominal price. They can have better marketing facilities and better price if their areas have railway link. It is regrettable that inspite of producing world famous art objects, they lead sub-standard life.

The yardstick of development for any area depends on its communication, railway being the main factor. So, the development of my area is also related to proper railway connection.

It is a matter of grave concern that even after 50 years of Independence, only 20% of Bankura is covered by railway and for the remaining 80% railway is just a dream.

Our Hon. colleague Shri Basudev Acharya has mentioned about Indian Railway in his speech. I want to mention the drawbacks in my Constituency and the district of Bankura. Moreover, I would also like to mention that due to lack of electricity in railway compartments, there are repeated accidents, dacoity, theft in the compartments. Water must be provided in the long distance trains because people have become habitualed

[Smt. Sandhya Bauri]

in travelling by crowded trains but scarcity of water results in making the compartment unhygenic and stinking, resulting in the sickness of the passengers. In this context, I would suggest that medical facilities should also be provided in the long distance trains. I want to mention from my previous experience the difficulties I faced last time. This incident will also explain why I mention Shri Acharya. Travelling by Adra Local I took Subarnareka for Dhanbad to get Rajdhani for Delhi. The train was running late by six hours and I was so tense whether I would be able to board Rajdhani or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Hon. Railway Minister should pay attention to what the Hon. Member is narrating.

SHRIMATI SANDHYA BAURI : From Pathardih to Dhanbad the train runs by diesel engine. I want that Pathardih to Dhanbad should have electrification so that Dhanbad should be directly connected with Adra. This will ensure the timely arrival of passengers in Dhanbad to board Rajdhani.

I have come here as the representative of the people and I want to raise their problems. The existing train BDR in my area has not been functioning since long. But I find no mention in the budget in this regard. The train which was running in the past must start again for the benefit of the people. I find a plan for Rail Bus in the budget. But what about the train which was already functioning in the past. I urge upon the Railway Minister to restore the BDR train again so that people of my area are benefited.

The area is industrially and economically backward. The inhabitants include the poor socially backward SCs and STs who travel by bus to other districts for their livelihood. Sometimes they meet with accidents also by travelling in crowded bus. One such accident occured near Durgapur Barrage sometime back. There is a scheme to start Rail bus. But why not revive the old train which was doing great service to the people of my area?

Moreover, I would also like to mention that the frequency of New Delhi Super Fast and Puri Patna, Cochin Patna must be increased twice to thrice or four times in a week for the benefit of the commuters. With these words, Madam, after drawing the kind attention of the Hon. Minister through you to increase the frequency of trains for my area which has only two trains, I once again thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget.

[English]

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL (Buldhana) : Respected Chairperson, Madam, I would like to give my speech in Marathi, that is in my regional language. I request the hon. Minister of Railways to take care of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Have you given the notice?

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL : Yes, I have given that.

*During the last ten months this is the third Railway Budget which is being presented to this House. We are discussing 1996-97 budget, 1997-98 budget and supplementary demands for grants. During the discussion on two Railway Budgets ealier I had raised the question of backward region of Vidarbha where the district of Buldhana is located. I had also raised the question of proposed Khamgaao-Jalna railway line in this district. During both the discussions Hon. Railway Minister Paswanji, and Satpal Maharaj Ji had agreed this railway line was very necessary. But unfortunately there is no mention about this railway line in this years Railway Budget. The proposal of this railway line is there for last 15 years. Engineering Survey of this line has also been completed. Economic survey of this line has also been completed. This railway line is important because it connects Bombay-Hawarah line as well as Bombay-Nanded line of South Central Railway. Another significant aspect of this railway line is that it is going to connect 7 districts of Marathwada and 9 districts of Vidarbha. The proposed Railway line-Khamgaao-Jalna is expected to cover distance of 145 kms. If it is extended upto Shegaon the total distance would be 165 kms. This railway line should be extended upto Shegaon because Sheagaon is an important railway station on Central Railways. Since this railway line connects important railway lines, as I mentioned earlier, it would Cater to the needs of 16 districts of Vidarbha and Marathwada. In both the Railway Budgets Hon. Minister mentioned that Railways are not merely commercial organisation but it is service oriented organisation. It is a Welfare Organisation as well. That is why Railways should expand their network in backward areas. If this is the view of the Hon. Minister. Then why should this railway line which would Cater to the needs of backward areas of Vidarbha and Marathwada not be taken into consideration?

Hon. Minister, Shri Ram Naik mentioned just now that Shiv Sena has Captured Assembly, Corporation, MPs Seats in Mumbai. Shiv Sena is the ruling party is Maharashtra today. That is why we have an apprehension that Maharashtra is being deliberately neglected by the Central Government. In the last years Budget we had the same experience. No new railway line is proposed in Mumbai or Maharashtra by the Central Government in this Budget. On one hand give Slogan that for removing backwardness Railways line are essential and railway network should spread in backward area. But when I look at the Budget I find that railway lines are going to be there in Bihar, Karnataka and Meghalaya. But even though there is need of railway line in backward region of Maharashtra. I get the impression that Maharashtra is being deliberately

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Marathi.

ignored - Vidarbha and Marathwada are so backward that there is no industries in this area. As there is no irrigation, agriculture is not developed in this area. There is large unemployment in this region. There are few other facts which I want to mention. A big lake has been formed at Lonar because of meteoric fall. It is considered as a wonder of the world. Maharashtra Government has declared Buldhana district as tourism Centre. In this district monther of Chatrapati Shivaji was born in Sindhakhed. This place is called as 'Matrusthal'. The Government has declared this place as tourist centre. Shegaon is also situated in Buldhana district. 'Samadhi' of Gajanan Maharaj is located in Shegaon. Everyday atleast 16000 devotees visit Shegaon. Nearly one and half lakh devotees visit Shegaon every week. This railway line is of great significance as it would enable people of Marathwada to go to Vidarbha and vice versa. It would also enable devotees to visit Parali Vaijnath, another pilgrim Centre of this district.

Parali Vaijnath Thermal Power station is also situated in Beed district. Presently Coal is transported there through Chandrapur-Hyderabad. If Shegaon-Jalna railway line is constructed the distance for transporting Coal would be 646 kms. only. Thus a distance of 246 kms. would be reduced if Shegaon-Jalna railway line is constructed. The Country also would be benefited because of this railway line. If we take these factors into account. We realise how important Shegaon-Jalna railway line is for connecting the two regions and for ensuring development of this area.

But Railway Board has taken a view that this railway line is not economically viable and we have got a similar reply from Hon. Minister. Himself says that Railways are not meant for earning profit but it is service oriented organisation to achieve welfare of the people. But at the same time we receive this reply from the Hon. Minister and this railway line is not sanctioned by the Railways. As this railway line would handle traffic of crores of passengers, lead to industrial development of this area and as several Pilgrim Centres are located on this line. I would request Hon. Minister to take up this railway line and atleast make a beginning. I request the Hon. Minister to take up this railway line and provide some funds in this Budget.

Just now I mentioned that Shegaon is an important holy place where thousands of devotees visit every week. But Geetanjali Express on Mumbai-Howarah route does not have a half at Shegaon. During both the Budget discussions I had mentioned that Geetanjali Express should have a halt at Shegaon. People of this area have made this demand for a long time. But it is our misfortune that this small request of providing two minutes halt of Geetanjali Express at Shegaon has not been accepted in last 10 months. I request that this demand should be taken into consideration.

On Bombay-Hawrah railway line there is Nandura station near Buldhana. There is railway crossing near Nandura station. Bombay, Calcutta highway passes through this crossing. There is traffic jam when trains pass through this crossing many accidents have taken place here. People have demanded that there should be an overbridge here. But this demand has also not been considered at all by the Railways. I request the Hon. Minister to consider this demand and see that overbridge is built there.

Even though I hail from Vidarbha. I am a resident of Mumbai for past 26 years. I live at Kandivli.

There is a railway crossing at Kandivli. Central Government, Maharashtra Government and Mumbai Corporation have reached an agreement to construct an overbridge at Kandivli. The construction of this overbridge involves some military land. But Army is not giving consent for use of this land. So the issue is hanging for the last two years for want of Army's consent. But in the last ten months this Government could not get Army's approval for this land. This land is vacant land and does not house any building. But over this small issue the construction of overbridge is pending. I hope Hon. Minister would consider this demand and take up construction of overbridge at Kandivli. Which would help in removing traffic congestion and would really remove hardship of the people. I am thankful to Madam Chairperson, for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[Enlgish]

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU (Cuttack) : Madam, it is a strange coincidence that I stand here to speak when you are presiding over the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You must thank me!

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : Madam, I crave your indulgence to quote from the White Paper prepared by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

> "The inability of the Indian Railways to meet the demand for various types of passenger and freight movements has been one of the main reasons which has given rise to greater use of road transport and the growth of the country's vehicle fleet."

What I wanted to say is that one Department of the United Front Government has been criticising another Department of the same Government. I do not know what has happened. As you know, Madam, the United Front Government consists of many constituents and they have been pulling apart. It has been very clearly indicated by the hon. Speaker the other day. I have a feeling that the United Front Government is trying to advocate a new maxim. The maxim is that "Divided we stand, united we fall." Maybe, it may be true of the United Front Government. I do not want to dilate much further on that.

I do not want to go into the prologue of the Railways and I hit straight on the head of the nail. As you see,

[Shri Anadi Charan Sahu]

the Budget indicates - or previous to that, the Economic Survey had indicated - a 4.3 per cent increase in freight traffic and a 3.7 per cent increase in passenger traffic from April to November. That is very good. It has shown a considerable increase and that has shown the efficiency of the Railways within that period. But what has happened thereafter?

This Railway Budget - pardon me for saying so - is like a bikini suit! What is a bikini suit? One would like to ask this question. A bikini suit is one that which reveals what is suggestive, but that which it conceals is vital. This Railway Budget is like a bikini suit! It has suggested something, but has concealed many things. What has it suggested? It has suggested new railway lines; it has suggested going into the backward areas; it has suggested passenger amenities; it has suggested staff amenities. But at the same time, it has not taken into consideration many factors which should be required for running a railway in a proper manner.

You would see that there have been 1670 over-aged coaches. That has been indicated in the Railway Budget itself. The immediate requirement was to have more coaches, proficiency-wise or efficiency-wise, to go into the running of the Railways. That has not been taken into account. Madam, they have given an indication that the locos which were being used by the Railways had a power of 166 grams per diesel consumption hour or something of that sort. I do not know about it. They have an ambitious plan of reducing it to 150 grams per hour for diesel consumption or something like that. They have been thinking of bringing about some efficiency in fuel consumption. What was required that they should have gone into production of diesel locomotives at the Varanasi Diesel Locomotive Works itself.

What has happened last year? Till date, they have been able to produce only 114 diesel locomotives although the target was 150 locomotives. In 1997-98, they could have given more money for the production of locomotives at the Diesel Locomotive Works at Varanasi. They have given only Rs. 4 crore for more production of diesel locomotives which is not at all adequate. If they want fuel efficiency, if they want better running of trains, they should go in for more production. They should go into uni-gauge conversion. They had a target of 8100 kilometres in the Eighth Plan and with much difficulty, they could hardly come up to 6000 kilometres. They have not gone up to that figure but they may go up to 6000 kilometres by the end of the Eighth Plan, as a result of which fuel efficiency has not increased. The operating cost has been going up in some Railways like the Eastern Railway and the Southern Railway, the operating cost is about Rs. 160 and Rs. 170 per Rs. 100 of earning.

This is very bad. It shows that something is wrong with the managerial efficiency of those people who are manning those Railways. The operating ratio of the South-Eastern Railway is only 69 per cent and that is quite good. But the hon. Railway Minister has not taken into account the request to give more lines to the South-Eastern Railway where the operating ratio is very good. He has saturated the railway lines in Chakardharpur area and is thinking of a third line. Why does he not think of having more new lines from Talcher to Bimlagarh? He can transport ore in those areas. Why does he not think of Daitari-Baspani line and extend it up to Kiripurn? This will help in transporting ore and other things. We will be setting up mega power plants in another two years' time. Why does not think of that? When the line is saturated, why does he go in for a third line in the same area? Why does he not think of new areas, new lines and new mining areas which will help in the economic development of this country? He may kindly look into these things. When the operating efficiency of a particular zone is very good, he may kindly give more lines and facilities.

Towards passenger amenities, he has given only Rs. 106 crore for SER whereas in the Northern Railway, in the Eastern Railway and in the Southern Railway, for amenities are more than Rs. 160 crore is each. I think this is disparity. It is a lopsided matter which needs adequate attention of the hon. Minister. I do not want to go into the details of those things...*(Interruptions)* Madam, kindly give me a few more minutes. Kindly be condescending to me.

Recently, we have, under the leadership of Shri Sharad Pawar, met the Minister of Railways who had promised us many things. I would not like to go into all those things or repeat them. I would only request that it should not be a cancelled like a promissory note. There is reason for saying that it should not be a cancelled promissory note.

Last year, the Railway Budget had provided many item. But during the Revised Estimates, a lot of things were cut off like the Khurda-Bolangir railway line. They had provided Rs. 2 crore but Rs. 130 lakh have been taken off during the Revised Estimates stage. That was not proper. If he is thinking of the backward area, Bolangir is a backward area. If he is thinking of the North-East region, I would request that Bolangir should also be thought up of and there should not be any reduction during the Revised Estimates period. That is why, I say that it should not be a cancelled promissory note. Give me some more time because I would like to speak on the GRP and the RPF.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : An amount of Rs. 2 crore was allotted. Why was that money not spent?

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : I know that. I am not debating that point.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We should know the problem. Suppose it happens again. Unless the land is provided, how will money be spent?

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : The land can be acquired if sufficient funds are given. It is a mere pittance. If you give a drop of water, can we quench our thirst?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I will give you more money, but you should assure me that you will give me the land.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Why do you both not sit together and sort out this problem?

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : We do assure you that land will be given and all that is required.

Now, so far as RPF and GRP are concerned, kindly give me five minutes. I am a policeman. So, I would like to mention as to what can be done.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude in two minutes because you have already spoken for 20 minutes.

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : I will be very brief because that is a very vital matter. We should think about it in the historical perspective as to why it has become Government Railway Police. It has become Government Railway Police because the Railways were a private company earlier and the Government had to administer some sort of justice to regulate so many things. After it Railways were taken over by the Government, the same name remains.

We got the RPF. When the RPF was created, the best lot of policemen were not taken into the Force. I am sorry to say it. It is a fact that the GRP is managed by inefficient staff. I am sorry to say this also. I also know that this is the thing of RPF. I would request you to kindly go through the *'Memoirs of a Bengal Civil Servant'* written by a famous civil servant, Sir John Beans in 1902. He had indicated in that book that dacoities were committed sometimes with the passive consent of the officers in charge of the police station or may be with their active consent. Both the GRP and the RPF are guilty of such actions even now. What the RPF does is that it seizes property. It does not arrest the person concerned. The GRP arrests the person concerned but never seizes the property and they take the share. Hon. Minister, Sir, kindly lend me your ears.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please pay attention. He is making a very good point.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I am looking into the map.

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : I will not dilate much on those things. Kindly have a look at article 249 of the Constitution wherein there is an indication that the Parliament can pass a resolution for taking over certain actions of the States concerned. In that context, I would request the Hon'ble Minister to go through the Seventh Schedule, entry 2A of Union List and entry 2 of State List. Because of the time constraint, I cannot go into the details. He may kindly go through it. Some Resolution can be passed by the Council of States, that is, the Rajya Sabha, and the policing of the Railways in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar could be taken over immediately for a year. Let us enforce it as an experiment.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think, that would be a very good idea.

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : If it becomes good, we can go into a permanent solution of the matter. I am only giving a solution to the matter. Just think of it. Kindly ruminate as to whether it can be done or not.

So far as my constituency is concerned, I will tell you in only one or two words. We have had a lot of promises from the hon. Minister.

[Translation]

That promisary note may become invalied.

[English]

Kindly think of it. I only request you to think of giving a Temple Train from Puri to Amritsar. It was running for four months. But somehow or the other, it did not get the favour of the Ministry of Railways now. Kindly think over this matter. I would not say about other matters. I would only request for a Temple Train. That should run from Puri to Amritsar.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : These are very good points.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH : Jena ji is encouraging the Members of Orissa and he was showing the map to hon'ble Railway Minister very seriously. He should also consider about Madhya Pradesh and therefore I request that he should give same treatment to all.

[English]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Just now he has talked to you also for ten minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Perhaps the Minister of Palriamentary Affairs wants tc make some announcement.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): Madam, as you know, the House will sit late today. Arrangements have been made to serve dinner to the hon. members and friends from the Press in Room No. 70 from 8.30 p.m. onwards. The dinner will also be served to officers and staff of the Lok Sabha Secretariat. I will certainly mention about the Ministry also. They are also cordially invited to have the dinner.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Perhaps arrangements will have to be made for breakfast also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We shall see to that.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Jena Sahab, you have not inviter Press persons.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All have been invited.

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the railway budget. I exress my gratitude towards hon'ble Minister of Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan that he has made provision to regularise the casual labourers, to give benefit to be porters and to provide equal Medical facilities to the retired employees. He has not increased the fare for 95-96 percent people who travel in second class and at the same time he has thought about the backward areas from Jammu-Kashmir to the other parts of the country. Due to the paucity of time, I would like to draw your attention towards a few problems. First, there is no foot path on the railway bridges constructed over the canals or big rivers in our and other areas. In our area Punpun river, Patna Canal and Adari river do not have footpath due to which hundreds of people die every year. There is a railway bridge and when they cross it in between train comes with high speed at that stage they are not able to cross it and are crushed in the middle of the bridge. It is a serious problem. The construction of footpath does not involve huge amount. When people see that the train is not coming from any side they cross the bridge and are run over. Please pay attention towards it.

Secondly, I would like to draw your attention towards another serious problem of my area. If the broad gauge line from Badkakana is extended upto Bihata from Sonnagar, it would reduce the distance of hundred kilometres. If we want to go Patna, first we have to go to Gaya which is hundred kilometre away and from Gaya we go to Patna. If this line is extended it would reduce this distance and it would also be beneficial for the people of surrounding areas. A line from Sone Nagar to Bihata should be constructed certainly. I would like to make one more submission that while responding to a point raised by an hon'ble Member, the Hon'ble Minister had said that in case land was made available for doubling the line from Gaya to Patna, funds would be provided immediately. But I would like to submit that no passenger train has been introduced from Son Nagar to Burbadih although double line is there. Only one passenger train and Palamu express run on this. Since railway gets income from freight on this line, it has been doubled but railway does not get any income from Patna to Gaya as people have means of transport from these places. Therefore, the availability of land and other difficulties are coming in the way. We want to establish link between North Bihar and South Bihar. Today demands are being made to form Jharkhand State, Vananchal State in North Bihar and if railway line from Gaya to Patna is doubled. North Bihar and South Bihar would be inter linked and there would be no such demand. Hence, the announcement of doubling of railway line from Gaya to Patna should be made is during the current financial year because it is an important railway line.

Now, I would like to draw the attention of the House and the Government towards a few problems of my area. In our area the distance between Navinagar road and Navadih is very much. As a result of which first of all the people living in the surrounding areas have to go Navinagar and thereafter they go to Navinagar road station thus they have to cover 20 kilometre distance unnecessarily. Means of transport or roads etc. are not available in this area. Therefore, we demand for a halt station at Kawla-Dhohadih.

Likewise, the distance between Anugrahnarayan road and Fesar is very much keeping in view this fact in mind a halt station should be provided at Kurhama. Recently, when I went to Kurhama I saw there was no means of transport in that area hence a halt station should be providing immediately. Anugrahnarayan road is the main station of our district. I think if Anugrahnarayan road station is shifted to about one kilometre in the east near the Patna Daltanganj State highway, our district headquarters can be connected with railway service. If you can not connect our district headquarters with railway, at least expand the Anugrahnarayan road sation towards the east near the Patna Daltanganj road. I think in that case this station would beneficial for the entire district and trains would be available there round the clock and all means of transport would be available there. I would like to make one more submission that there is half rake point at Anugrahnarayan road in our area due to which the rakes of fertilizers are attached at Daltanganj and sometimes at Sasaram instead of this station. Hence, I request that full rake point be provided there with a view to resolve the difficulty being faced by the people of this area in regard to availability of fertilisers.

I would like to submit that no important mail or express train such as Purushottam express, Bombay Mail, Calcutta Mail, stops at any Station in our Aurangabad district while it has vast area. The area from Dehri to Gaya falls under Aurangabad but stoppage has not been provided for Mail/express trains at any place due to which sometimes we have to go to Delhi or sometimes to Gaya. I myself have to go to Sasaram to catch Purushottam express. Therefore, a stoppage should be provided at any suitable place for Delhi-Calcutta bound mail/express trains passing through this area. It can be ascertained through computer.

Railway does not function only on commercial basis in our country. From the side Pramod Mahajan ji was stating that railways has earned a profit of percent which shows that it would make more loss in the coming time. I would like to tell him that America does not has have the growth rate of even one percent but it is at the stage of consumption. There is a stage in America in

economics that is the stage of consumption and today they are at that stage, their growth rate is very low. It is not even one percent but are they not making progress. Hence, we should not consider railways from the view point of profit of 9 percent or 10 percent.

18.00 hrs.

Madam Chairperson, our country is a very vast country. It should be viewed with reference to the facilities provided to the people of such a big country. Therefore, I demand that superfast trains should not be stopped only at big stations just for the sake of profit but a stoppage should also be provided at Anugrahnarayan and Rafiganj. Trains such as Mumbai Mail, Purushottam express, Kalka Mail should be stopped there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, you please conclude you have spoken for 10 minutes.

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Madam Chairperson, I am concluding. Now I want to raise another point. Give us time keeping in view my State and Janata Dal so that we can express our all problems.

I would like that a line should be constructed from Rafiganj to Gadwa via Aurangabad so that our district headquarters may be connected by rail. I sought information about Dehri Passenger train starting from Gaya through a question and the hon. Minister, in his reply, said that it remains stationed at Dehri for ten hours. There is no train for Gadwa and Palamu. Therefore, this passenger train should be extended from Dehri to Palamu. It would be very advantageous to the local people. Palamu is a backward area. Think about the welfare of the poor people of that area. My district as well as Palamu are terrorist affected districts.

Madam Chairman, one more thing I would like to say that there is a passenger train No. 127 up and 128 DN in that area but only 4-5 coaches are attached with it. It always remain over crowded. I have seen that people generally hanging with the doors and as a result of which accidents takes place. The hanging passengers fall down and die. Therefore, I would request that atleast 10 coaches should be attached with this train. Earlier this train was upto Varanasi but now it is terminated at Mughal Sarai. My submission is that it should be extended upto Varanasi.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude within a minute.

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Madam, now I am going to conclude. The Broad Gauge line to Sone passes through G.T. Road. This G.T. Road was constructed by Sher Shaha Suri. I had also raised this issue in special mention but it could not be replied to so far. I had stated at that time and also repeating the same thing today that the traffic jam is frequent on this road. An overbridge should be constructed there. Keeping in view the importance of the G.T. Road. After leaving the train at Dehri, it takes sometimes 24 hours to reach Aurangabad due to traffic jam on route. Therefore, I request that an overbridge should be constructed there.

Madam, there are many problems but I, through you, would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to a main problem. The hon. Minister is well wisher of the press people. Since, I am raising the problem of press people, please let me raise it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, please conclude. You have already taken in minutes.

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Madam, the Press is called the fourth estate : Just like railway second class, 99 per cent people in the press are second class people. I would request you to make arrangements for press people to travel in second class on free coupons. They are your well wishers and write in your favour. They should be provided railway coupons and permitted to stay in dormitories. They do not get time to buy tickets from the stations. So please provide them coupons...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude with in a minute.

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Please make arrangements of rail tickets for them...*(Interruptions)*

Thank you for providing me time to speak.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI (Ghosi) : Madam Chairman, I listened to the speeches made by other hon. Member on Railway Budget in the House. Two types of discussions are taking place. It seems from speeches of all the hon. Members that they are very eager for development. So much so that all the members had proposed schemes for development. If they are to be implemented, it would require Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 90,000 crores. Besides other facilities, there is a large demands of information of new trains from Kanyakumari to Kerala.

I would like to submit that all these demands are genuine but I would also like to request my colleagues to consider their demands seriously. The Britishers had constructed 52 thousand kms. Long rail line in the country. Our Government could construct only 10,000 km. Long rail line during the last 50 years of independence. For this purpose, we must have a transport policy. I would like to raise only those points only which have not been untouched so far. What is the transport policy of the Government of India? 100 crore people of India are related to the rail-transport, road-transport, air-transport, and shipping transport. What would be the freight rate in these transports? On what basis the tax would be fixed? If I go to Varanasi by aeroplane in economic class, I will how to pay Rs. 2500 as fare. What is the fare of roadways? What is rail fare? If we do not accept the ground realities and work only for cheap popularity, it would not serve any purpose. I have been a Member of Parliament for the last 23 years. I would like to thank Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra because the Ministry of Railway received the highest Budgetary support during his tenure. The railway received second highest Budgetary support during the

[Shri Kalpnath Rai]

tenure of Shri Madhu Dandawate - the present Vice Chairman of Planning Commission Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is seen as a protector of the down trodden, exploited and poor people. Please to the Vice Chairman of Planning Commission and tell him that Members of Parliament are pressing hard for increasing Budgetary Support to the railways because this can be done by the Planning Commission only.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We had gone.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI : Our Prime Minister has made announcements regarding the issued relating from Guwahati to Kashmir. Through this House, i want to make a request that atleast if you implement all the announcements made by Hon'ble Prime Minister then I will thank you. When the Prime Minister makes an announcement, it conveys something, it means something. I was requesting you on that day too, not to take in the capacity of Railway Minister. Fortunately, you are the Leader of the house, So, you please speak here as a leader of the country.

18.10 hrs.

[COL. RAO RAM SINGH *in the Chair*]

Today, the most important Question is as to how the development will take place. There is a heavy demand in this regard from our MPs. How resource mobilisation would be undertaken for this? I would like to urge our MPs to show resource mobilisation methods to our hon'ble Minister so that 60 to 100 thousand crore rupees, which is required for these schemes could be made available. Then, how resource mobilisation would be done is also a major question. Any Government may come or go but if development has to be taken place then it will be possible only through resource mobilisation.

I have seen that whenever elections are held for this Parliament, 75 percent MPs loose their seats. We may take the figures of 1989, 1991 or 1996, General Election won election in 1991 have lost during 1996. If Parliament elections are held again, the result will be the same. These, who are MPs today, 75 percent among them will not win. The reason for this is that there is a tremendous pressure of the public on the MPs for development of their area. When the MPs would not under take any development work, the people will not vote for them even though they may boast that despite their untiring efforts, they could not fulfill the demands of the people.

Today, two things are happening in the country. The policies which we, say MPs or Cabinet members, are formulating for cheap popularity and appeasement, it is leading the country towards a disaster. Today, I have read in the Editorial of the 'Times of India' that demonstrations are being held and people are resorting to blocking roads demanding Electricity. Why the whole country is facing power crisis? We have taken a decision to generate 38 thousand Megawatt power during the Eighth Five Year Plan but we could generate only 17 thousand Megawalt power. Then, what will be the growth rate of the entire country, how the country will progress? In years to come we will generate electricity at the rate of Rs. 2/- per unit and we want to supply it at 20 paise per unit, then how it is possible? Today, people also say that they should get the electricity even if the rate is doubled. You have fixed the rate of electricity at 20 paise per unit and people are being deprived of electricity for months, such double standards could not be allowed. We must tell the people that the electricity is being generated at the cost of rate Rs. 2 per unit and we will guarantee the supply of electricity if they pay atleast Rs. 2 per unit. The same thing is happening in Railways. If the country has to progress through the railways and if the Railway users and commuters do not pay reasonable fare and tax then how the railways will develop?

You have been the leader of opposition, you have never allowed the House to run but after becoming Minister you are puzzled at the things going on. Earlier you used to present the house from running properly, now the MPs will tell you what the fact is.

At the outset, I congratulate you on behalf of the people of the country for regularising 50-60 thousand poor casual labourers. You are a socialist. The outlook which you have towards the poor and have nets show that you want to serve the poor people. Gandhiji has said that when a question arises before you as to whether to do the any particular work or not, then you should think first whether that work is going to help the poor and if so, that should be done. The regularisation of casual labourers by the Minister of Railways is similar to what happened during Namak Satyagarh Aandolan. The Minister has indead touched the heart of the poor. Several poor labourers have met me while I was travelling between Gorakhpur and Banaras. They told me that they have been regularised and indeed they are blessed.

I can not express in words the happiness which was evident on their faces. You should not indulge in appeasement tactics. You should invite all the Members to discuss as to how we can mobilise resources. This is indeed a big problem. You may organise a conference of the Chief Minister of all the states to deleberate on this issue. It has come to my notice that the Chief Minister and Ministers of various states charge higher power tarrif from the railways. On the other hand, they charge lower tarrifs from the industrial units of their states. Therefore, you should call the Chief Ministers of all the states and on them to supply power to railway on uniform rate in the entire country as all the Members are pressing the railways hard to undertake developmental works. Besides, you should recover the

huge out standing dues from the States. You can not achieve the development of the whole country overnight.

Second thing I would like to mention relates to the incidents of loot and theft in railway. You should give powers to your General Manager to write the character roll of the personnel of G.R.P. and R.P.F. which will drastically reduce the incidents of theft and loot in the railways. Today is the situation that you say that you do not have the information, the Chief Minister also says that he does not have the information. After all who is responsible for checking such incidents. The problem can not be solved by making such stantements. I, therefore, wants to say that the responsibility of law and order should be equally should by both the State Government and the Union Government. Therefore, you should empower the General Manager to write the character rolls.

I would like to say something about budgetary support also. Prof. Madhu Dandvate, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission has also been Union Minister of Railways. He alongwith Shri George Fernandes and Shri Jafar Sharif left no stone unturned to complete the Konkan Railway Project. I congratulate them for this. You should ask Prof. Danddvate to provide the budgetary support in the proportion it was given earlier. 16 lakhs railway employees are serving 100 crores people of India. I would like to congratulate them. Today no other department is serving the common people as Railways. Therefore, if we do not appreciate and congratulate the staff and officers of Railways and indulge in appeasement tactics then they would not feel motivated to work with zeal. The credit for the good work done in the railway, after you become its Minister, can not and should not go to you done. You are not operating the trains. It is the drivers who are doing this job, 16 lakh employees of the Railway who are putting up their best in the service of the people of the country deserves our compliments and appreciation. I congratulate you also with a word of advise that you should behave as a national leader and should not adopt the policy appeasement.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You should conclude on this happy note.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI : I am just concluding. You should call the meeting of the Membrs of all the States. You should invite them on the dinner and discuss as to how resources could be mobilised, as to how the incidents of thefts could be checked and as to how the funds could be raised through Railways. Just now an hon. Member from Gujarat was saying that at least 100 crores of rupees would be spent on the construction of rail line there but where this money would come from? You are a wise and matured leader and you have also been a very active Member of the Opposition. You did not allow the Government to function for several years. You have got an opportunity now. You are a very dasting Minister. I on behalf of all the Members and on my behalf earnestly request you that cheep popularity would not lead you to a promissing future. Developmental works should be undertaken in the country and resources should be mobilised for this purpose then only we can carry out developmental works in our country.

I would like to mention one thing more less that if your guests go to railway station then the risk of becoming the victim of pick pocketers is very high these days. Thousands of people have encroached upon the railway land at New Delhi Railway Station. As much as 2000 hectares of railway land has been encroachment upon and you have not removed there encroachments. No new trains are being introduced from New Delhi railway station because there is no land available for construction of new platforms. Some of your people will come to you and say that some poor people have made their huts there. Then would you allow them to have huts on Railway land? Then some day they may construct their jhuggies in Parliament also. After all these has to be some rate, principle or system in the country. Therefore, I would like to request you to accord providing to rule of law, budgetary support and resources mobilisation and concentrate on developmental works. With these words I support the Railway budget.

*SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL (Beed) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I would like to express my views in Marathi. This is the second Budget presented by Hon. Minister. When the last Railway Budget was presented, as Hon. Member bitterly criticised the Budget. I had pointed out to the Hon. Member that Ahmednagar-Beed-Parali railway line is not just a railway line but it is a fate line for the people of Marathwada. The condition of our district is such that if a child asked to describes a train, it won't be able to describe it. The child will have to be shown a picture of a train from some work. After 50 years of independence when we are moving in to a computer age and 21st century, it is the misfortune of Beed district that it is the most backward district of Marathwada, where there are no railway lines and for seeing a train you have to refer to a book. I have to say with regret that this is the condition of this district even after 50 years of independence.

Beed district belongs to erstwhile Nizam State. Some railway project was taken up during the Nizam rule. But as there was some dispute between Nizam railway and British railway, the railway line work could not make much progress. This district could not get any justice even during that time.

My district is known for certain things. I asked an Hon. Member who sits beside me as to what his district was famous for. He told me that nearly 4 lakh birds migrated to his district Bharatpur from Australia and other countries. Many people in the country visit

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Marathi.

[Smt. Rajani Patil]

Bharatpur to see the migratory birds. But I had to tell him about my district that unlike birds in his district, nearly 4 lakh people migrated from my district to other places in search of earning livelihood. People from my district go to western Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa to get some jobs and they work in Sugar factories as workers to cut Sugarcane. This is the misfortune of my district. That is why sanctioning of Beed-Parali railway line is very important for the development of this area. Since I became Member of Parliament, I have been taking lead is pursuing this question for past 9 months.

I would like to point out that freedom fighters of our area had started an agitation during the freedom struggle. During the last budget discussion I had mentioned that freedom fighters of my area might be forced to start another agitation. Hon. Minister had given a patient hearing to what I had to say. Recently a delegation of freedom fighters of my area had come to Delhi. I had taken the delegation with me and we had met Hon. Prime Minister Deve Gowdaji and Hon. Minister Paswanji and all concerned officers. But the efforts had not led to any concrete result. I had requested Hon. Prime Minister that if the criterion of economic feasibility was applied our area will not have a railway line for another 100 years. But if you consider on humanitarian ground that this is a backward area where railway line is a must for its development. If you adopt this approach. Only then it will be possible provide railway lines in this area.

I am happy to mention here that in the recent meeting of Cabinet Committee on economic affairs which was held on 21st. Ahmednagar-Beed-Parali railway line has been sanctioned. I congratulate the Government for taking this step. Even though I being to Opposition. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government. This was a question which was hanging fire for past 30 years. Many agitations had taken place in our area for highlighting this issue. But this problem could not be solved. But this Government solved this long standing problem in the meeting held on 21st and took a decision to solve the problem. That is why I would like to specially congratulate the Government.

Hon. Minister Paswanji has already visited our district. He saw for himself the problems of our area and how backward our district is. That is why while congratulating. I would like to point out one thing. The budget for Ahmednagar, Beed-Parali railway line is of 353 crores of rupees. But the actual provision made for this railway line is only 1 crore of rupees. If the provision is so low, then I am afraid this railway line, for which we have been waiting several years for its sanction, will take 350 years for its completion. Only 4th or 5th generation after us would be in a position to actually see this railway line.

Therefore, while congratulating for sanctioning this railway line, I would like to request you to make significant budgetary provision and see that this railway line is completed in a time-bound manner.

Konkan Railway Project which was a dream for people of Konkan is almost sanctioned. As Shri Rambhau Naik, our party leader said people of Mumbai were also prepared to purchase bonds for completion of railway projects. But I represent Such a district where people are poor and half fed. If bonds are to be issued in my district. People of my area are so poor that they won't be in a position to purchase bonds. So, for completing railway project is my district. The Government will have to come forward and raise funds necessary for the purpose. Only then this railway project will be completed.

I want to make one or two points. In Nanded there is a Gurudwara. Large number of people from Punjab come to Nanded to pay obeisance in Gurudwara. They come by Sachkan Express. This train does not have a pantry car. That is why people coming from Punjab face lot of problem in getting satisfactory catering services. So I request that this Express train should have a pantry car.

My final request is about Tuljapur which is an important Pilgrim centre in Marathwada. Chatrapati Shivaji's deity Tulja Bhavani's temple is there in Tuljapur. Thousand of devotees from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka come to Tuljapur for having 'darshan' of Tulja Bhavani. But at Tuljapur there is no facility of trains. The distance between Solapur and Tuljapur is only 15 kms. If Solapur and Tuljapur are connected by a railway line, it will enable lakhs of devotees to visit Tuljapur to pay obeisance to Tulja Bhavani, the deity of Maharashtra.

I request the Hon. Minister to ensure timely completion of projects under by Railways. I also request Hon. Minister to complete Beed-Parali railway line in a time-bound manner and allocate maximum funds for this sanctioned railway line so that the dream of our backward area will be realised and trains will start running in this backward region. I thank you, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to speak. I also thank the House for listening to my speech in Marathi.

[English]

SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA (Serumpore) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister of Railways has submitted the Railway Budget which is being discussed in this august House. Without going into subjective analysis of the situtation, I confine myself to an objective analysis of this Budget. We will see that the hon. Minister has made so many promises to the people of the country. He wanted to satisfy the Members of Parliament those who met him several times and submitted different project reports for his consideration. The hon. Minister has said that he has a dearth of resources. He has given resource mobilisation as the most important point

and he has also said that without having a proper mobilisation, it may not be possible for the implementation of the railway projects. But you will be surprised to know as to how the resources can be mobilised; what are the steps which can be taken by the Ministry of Railways have not yet been properly defined in his Budget Speech.

Sir, one of the most important points of resource mobilisation is the wagon movement. Do you know how much money has been allotted this time and how much more goods will be carried by the wagons? The hon. Minister has said that the freight movement would be around 410 million tonnes in 1997-98. How can they expect that the Ministry of Railways will earn more resources with this type of wagon movement? While we have been talking about this thing, what is the condition of road transport in the country? If you analyse this thing then you will be surprised to know again that the road transportation has increased day by day but the rate of railway freight is gradually coming down. Foreign exchange outgo on diesel consumption per tonne kilometre by road transport is ten times more as compared to the rail transport. Can we think of it? Can this country afford it? How is it possible? We are crying about the Oil Pool Deficit which is Rs. 15,000 crore. Road transport means use of diesel and petrol. But the transportation through the railway wagons will not cost petrol and the diesel. So, why are they not utilising wagon movement in full length? What is the constraint before the Ministry? Can they explain it to us? Can the hon. Minister explain it to us? I would have been much happier if the hon. Minister had stayed in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN : But his very capable number two is here!

SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : I am also glad that the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways, Shri Satpal Maharaj is here.

The hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Satpal Maharaj, is here. I tell him that the Railways are not utilising their full potential to maximise their freight earnings. Their wagon procurement over the last five years has been less than the number of wagons condemned during the same period, that is, around 30,000. I do not know what the reply of the Minister of Railways in this regard is. How will the resources be mobilised? Will they be mobilised only by saying that mobilisation is necessary? I think day before yesterday, the hon. Minister was saying that he would like to know from the hon. Members how the Railways could earn much more money and how they could get much more resources. I am giving this positive suggestion to the Minister of Railways and I would be happy if he accepts it while giving his reply.

Sir, you will be surprised to know that earlier the budgetary support was 75 per cent but now it has come down to only 16 per cent. The Minister has given so many projects to us. I do not know when will all these projects be completed.

In regard to my State of West Bengal, how much money has been allotted as budgetary support? In 1997-98, only Rs. 127 crore have been allotted. You may not be surprised to know that in the constituency of the hon. Minister of Railways, the money allotted is more than Rs. 60 crore. I am not going to blame the hon. Minister of Railways for allotting Rs. 60 crore for his own constituency. That is the natural course of action. When the Minister of Railways is in his constituency, people will be running after him. They will be chasing him and asking him what he has done for his constituency. So, naturally, the Minister of Railways has done justice to the people of his constituency. But what about us?

Out of Rs. 127 crore allotted for West Bengal, you will be surprised to know, Sir, that he has allotted Rs. 10 crore for Lakhipur-Balurghat line; Rs. 9 crore for Digha-Tamluk line; Rs. 3 crore for Howrah-Amta line; Rs. 5 crore for Lakhikantpur-Namkhana line; Rs. 8 crore for Calcutta Circular Rail; Rs. 16.53 crore for electrification of Adhra-Midnapore line and Rs. 4 crore for doubling of Jhapatardhal-Ghuskara and Ghuskara-Bolpur lines. When I calculate all these things from the Budget, I find that it is around Rs. 127 crore only. It is really a problem for the West Bengal people. It is unfortunate that in the last few years, West Bengal got only six to seven kilometres of railway line. In 1980-81, we had about 4,202 kilometres of railway route and in 1994, it is 4,316 kilometres. I am not blaming the Minister for this. This time we expected that the railway track would be a little bit increased, but where is the hope in this year's Budget, I do not know.

I have some suggestions to make for the kind consideration of the Minister of Railways.

Sir, as you know it very well, Calcutta is over-burdened, so is Howrah station. So many trains are coming to the Howrah station that it is not possible for the Howrah Station to have a control over them. So, I have a positive suggestion for the hon. Railway Minister that he may fix up two important stations; one is Bali and the other is Dankuni, which are very near to Howrah. The Minister has already allotted some amount of money for Dankuni. So, I would request him to kindly make an arrangement so that some of the mail trains can stop at Bali and Dankuni stations. By doing this, he can help the people not to go to Howrah and then take another train from there. They can get down at these stations and go to their respective destinations from there. The hon. Minister may kindly think over it.

Sir, I would like to put forth another suggestion which is the most important thing. Lakhs of people travel every day by the E.M.U. trains. The hon. Minister of State will be surprised to know the difficulties of the passengers. If he can kindly fix up a date and visit

[Shri Pradip Bhattacharya]

some of these electric trains he will see that there are no doors in those trains whether it is winter or summer or rainy season! Whatever may be the season, there are no doors and fans in these trains! In some of the trains there are not even chairs for the passengers to sit and the passengers stand and travel in these trains.

What is this? So many promises were made in this Budget, particularly about the passenger amenities. But what are the positive steps that are taken for serving the railway passengers, particularly those who are the daily passengers? Some steps are to be taken for them.

I will request the hon. Minister to kindly visit any of these trains and to take appropriate steps so that the daily passengers can get a little benefit of travelling in E.M.U. trains.

Lastly, I will request the hon. Minister to kindly have a look at the properties of the Railways which are lying idle. He should see as to how best they could be utilised. If they do not do anything, let them go on for cultivation of the land. They will earn money out of that. Why is it that the lands are vacant for years together? There should be a commission to look into this matter. I will request the hon. Minister to set up a commission to see as to how the railway lands can be utilised.

[Translation]

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA (Patiala) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, discussion on Railway Budget has been taken place for the last few days. Railways, importance can be traced from the fact that a separate budget is presented for this. The importance of Railways has, of course increased, but it has failed to add to the confidence of our people. No development in railway traffic has taken place during the last Eight Five Year Plans because in 1951 three-forth of goods and passenger transportation was undertaken by railways and one-forth by road transport and today one-fourth is done by the railways and three-fourth by road. Benefit of monoply has been used for establishment rather than for expanstion. Expansion of a total of ten thousand kilometres of railway route has taken place during the last 50 years. Expansion of railways in general is discussed here and the Members point to lack of expansion in their respective constituencies but the Minister of Railways expresses his inability due to paucity of funds. In a way, he seems to be right. Wherefrom will the money come? The Railway Budget lacks a new direction. Whenever there is necessity of funds sometimes the fare is increased and sometimes the freight is increased. The hon. Minister has said that the fare for poor people has not been increased but will the 12 per cent increase in freight not affect the consumer goods? Will it not affect the poor? How can reasources be mobilized. This fact has not been taken seriously either by the Railway Minister or the Department of Railways. I think that the unproductive expenses should be curtailed and the savings effected in establishment expenditure should be utilized in production.

Thousands of acres of railway land is lying idle. Kalpnath Rai was right when he said that if the property at Delhi, Mumbai and other railway stations, where cost of land was rupees 50,000 per metre was utilized properly two Five Year Plans - could be funded with the railway property. No one is ready to utilize it properly. One day Barnalaji was saying that he was standing at the railway station where his friend could not get ticket. Even after trying his best he could not get a ticket and he had to pay rupees 1000 for a ticket of rupees 500. There is black marketing of tickets at every station. Here 'Tatkal' L.P.G., electricity and telephone connections is available on demand. if similar arrangement is made for railway ticket, money at present being collected under hand will go to the railway if we function like this, proper expansion of railways can be done.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the efficiency of railways should be increased. I have gone through a survey report. There are a number of uneconomical routes and these routes continue to be uneconomic for the last many years. They should be made economical. There are a number of goods trains such carry goods on up journey but return empty during down journey. A system should be developed whereby up and down goods train should not run empty. At times we find only the engine running on railway lines thereby affecting the movement of trains. No seminar has been organized by the Minister on mobilizing new resources people's views have not been sought. If any such programme is prepared, by the Minister and meaningful suggestions are sought it would go a long way in giving a right direction to the Ministry of Railways through mobilization of resources.

I want to highlight some problems of my State. Last year also I had mentioned about these but nothing has happened in this regard. I appreciate the Minister of Railways that he has made announcement in regard to making one lakh labourers permanent thereby saving them from exploitation by the contractors. A railway line of about 20 Kilometres length is going to be completed in Punjab after 50 years. No additional railway line has been laid till today in our State. Punjab is a border state. There is movement of military and army goods also. There is also N.F.L. in Nangal. Bhakhra Dam is also there. Movement of material for Thein Dam is also there. Food grains are supplied in the entire country by Punjab and due to load on railway traffic roads are affected. There is dire necessity of over-bridges particularly at Rajpura, Kurali Sarhind, Patiala and Morinda where traffic remains jam for hours. It is a great injustice to the people of that State who need to provide food to the people of entire country. Therefore, whenever therein discussion for over-bridges they used to say that half of the expenses should be born by the State. Punjab state has faught for the entire country. The expenditure incurred on this account is also being debited to their account. We said that there is a loan of

8000 crores of rupees towards us. Former Prime Minister had announced that it will be waited off but they are not ready to do so. From where the state will arrange money for over-bridges? In such circumstances arrangements may be made for over-bridges in Rajpura, Kurali, Sarhind and Morinda.

There are some underbridges like Lehra, Sunam which can be consructed by spending small amounts. Half of the city is on one side and the other half is on the other side. So there should be arrangements for under-bridges. I would like to mention that some double tracks have been provided in the country but not even a kilometre of double track has been provided in Punjab Malva belt starts from Rajpura and extends upto Bhatinda, there should be double track on this route. A number of trains run between Amritsar and Delhi, there should be arrangements for connecting these trains with D.M.U, Shttle or Interlink railway which may start from Bhatinda to Ambala cantt and Sarhind to Ambala cantt in order to connect them with Patiala and Malva belt which is half of Punjab. I am thankful to Minister of Railways that last year he had made a proposal in the Budget for linking Rajpura with Chandigarh the capital of the State but no funds have been provided in the plan even after one year, no line has been started till now. Only a mention has been made in the budget. A good news in this year's budget is that a programme for connecting Ludhiana with Chandigarh has been chalked out but it should be ensured that it may not meet the same fate.

I am also of the view that surveys are being conducted since 1934. One survey has been conducted with regard to Patiala-Narvana-via Samana railway line. This year also Minister has talked about the survey from Patiala to Jakhal via samana and Patiala to Narvana via Samana. Surveys are completed but work is not being done. I am of the view that surveys should also be conducted after discussions with the representatives of the people. Today Ludhiana-Chandigarh interlink and Rajpura-Chandigarh interlink are being constructed. But there is a point from where Ludhiana and Patiala can be connected with Chandigarh. There is a Saraibanjara station. I have talked to the officials of the Railway Board that a single line is sufficient here and with regard to the survey which has been conducted from Ludhiana to Chandigarh, they have told that they could not get the land there as the same is not being acquired, houses can not be shifted to some other place and in such a situation what can they do? About this I have to say that if survey is conducted in a proper way, there will be no difficulty. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will take one minute more. I have already stressed on the importance of Rajpura station. It interlinks half of the Punjab as it is a gateway of Punjab, there is no stoppage of Shan-e-Punjab there which runs from New Delhi to Amritsar. Stoppage of this train must be provided there. Shatabdi Express from New Delhi to Amritsar also does not stop there. Therefore arrangements should be made for the stoppage of this train there. One more Shatabdi Express from Amritsar should be introduced because the people of Punjab are in a great need of the same.

Likewise, Kalka Shatabdi passes through Chandigarh. We want that are more Shatabdi should be introduced there so that burden on the road could be reduced. I would like to say something about some other facilities like reservation. This facility is not available at Rajapura and Patiala. It should be provided there.

Station master of Chandigarh has no telephone facility. I had asked about it two times. If a telephone cannot be placed at the disposal of station master what also can be done. One telephone is there at enquiry but no telephone is there in station master's cabin. The bills of 'No smoking' can be seen stuck on every train and station but many people smoking in trains and at Stations; this should be stopped. There should be good arrangement of cleanliness.

When the hon. Minister of Railways visited Amritsar, he announced the introduction of a Golden Temple Express. Last year, in the reply of Rail-Budgut too, he had promised that Golden Temple Express would be introduced but that train could not be introduced. This train should be introduced. I would like to thank the hoh. Minister of Railways for introducing two other trains.

I would like to say one more thing. Barauni Express carries workers from Bihar for Punjab and Haryana and many workers want to detrain at Rajpura.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Chandumajra ji, please conclude.

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA : He had made commitment last year that Baruni Express would stop at Rajpura but that train does not stop there. Therefore, I would like to request that all the facilities announced in the Budget to the State, should be implemented. The Railways should be implemented. The Railways should find out new ways of mobilising resources and Railways should be given a new direction. I, through you, would like to submit that the Railways should not depend on only Budgetary support but mobilise its own resources.

*SHRI L. RAMANA (Karimnagar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Railway Budget for the year 1997-98 presented by the Hon. Minister for Railways Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. Railways are essential for the development of the country. They unite and integrate the entire nation. They are the life line of this nation. Hence we should strive hard to stretch the railways to every nook and corner of the country especially the backward and tribal areas. Railways came into existence in the country on April 16, 1853. On this day, the first train, hauled by a steam engine, travelled between Bombay and Thane, a stretch of 34 kms. Now the Railway

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Telugu.

[Shri L. Ramana]

network has expanded enormously covering 7100 stations using nearly 11,000 trains. It is the largest public sector undertaking in the country today. To present a budget for such a gigantic undertaking is by no means a simple task. Though there were economic constraints, the Hon. Railway Minister has done well to present a budget without any hike in the Second Class Passenger fares. And what is more, he has exempted 15 essential items from hike on freight rates. The common man in the country heaved a sigh of relief after presentation of the budget. It is indeed a rare thing to happen. My hearty congratulations to Hon. Railway Minister for this unprecedented achievement.

Sir, backward regions in the country deserve a special status in getting new railway line. Hon. Railway Minister took special interest in extending the new lines to the backward areas. As a result of his efforts, the North-Eastern Region, hitherto unknown in the Railway map, will soon be covered by the railway network. He will go down in the history of Railways for his efforts, achievements and progressive thinking to take the railways to the most backward and hitherto neglected regions of the country.

Sir, the Telangana region is the most backward and neglected area not only in the State of Andhra Pradesh but also in the entire country. I represent Karimnagar which is in Telangana. The people in Karimnagar had been anxiously waiting for the past 50 years for a new railway line. They do not have any railway connection either to the adjoining Maharashtra region or to other parts within their own State. Unfortunately, their long waiting, their patience which is unheard of earlier, did not bear any fruit so far. Ours is an area which has suffered continued negligence all these 50 long years even after independence. Their hope remained as a mere hope. Nearly four years ago a new 175 km railway line between Peddapalli and Nizamabad via Karimnagar was sanctioned. It was estimated to cost Rs. 190 crores. Survey for this line was completed long ago. Rs. 12 crores were already spent on this new line. But unfortunately, only a meagre amount of Rs. 5 crores are allocated for this year for this line. Thus only Rs. 17 crores have been allocated so far. It is needless to say that people in my Constituency are throughly disappointed at this meagre and negligible allocation. Sir, many important industries and installations like NTPC, Kesaram Cement Factory, Ramagundam Urea Factory and Sri Ram Sagar Project are located in this area. Nearly 3.5 lakh acres of land is being irrigated under Sri Ram Sagar project. Farmers are not getting remunerative prices for their produce as they cannot send their to other regions as there is no railway link. Hence farmers are facing innumerable difficulties. Even the transportation of industrial goods is becoming increasingly difficult. Hence, keeping the needs of the people in this region in view, I earnestly appeal to the Hon. Minister to allocate another Rs. 10 crores in the Supplementary Budget for the year. I hope and trust he would concede.

There was a proposal for a new line from Macherla to Raichur via Gadwal. But unfortunately the survey has now been restricted to Raichur-Gadwal only. I appeal to the Hon. Minister to conduct the surveys from Macherla to Gadwal.

Sir, it is a well known fact that the Railways are the largest carriers of passenger traffic in the country. But amenities available to the passengers who travel by trains are abysmally low. Trains do not have proper toilet facilities. There is no cleanliness in the trains. Hygienic conditions are totally absent. There are no drinking water facilities either in the stations or in the trains. Passengers face many hardships in the absence of these facilities when they travel by trains. Train journey is becoming miserable day by day. I hope, under your efficient stewardship, these basic facilities will be provided in the railways and conditions would soon improve.

Hon. Minister knows the pulse of the people. I am confident he would respond positively and take effective steps to improve conditions in the railways.

Sir, for the past 15 days, we have been witnessing many train robberies. Dacoity and looting in the running trains have become the order of the day. People now are mortally afraid to travel in the trains. I appeal to the Hon. Minister to convene a meeting of the Chief Ministers to discuss the law and order problem, the safety and secruity of the passengers in the trains throughout the country. Every possible effective step should be taken by the Railways to put an end to this problem once and for all. Hope, the Hon. Minister would consider this suggestion seriously.

Sir, Vijayawada is an important industrial, agricultural and commercial centre in Andhra Pradesh. Almost all the important trains in the South pass through this junction. An assurance was given earlier that a new building would be constructed at this place for providing more facilities to the people. A promise remained as a promise and no step was taken so far for constructing the new building for Railways at Vijayawada. No allocation for the purpose has been made in this budget too. I hope and trust that, to meet the aspirations of the local people, the Hon. Minister would take steps to construct a new building at Vijayawada.

Thanking you, Sir, for providing me this opportunity to speak. I conclude.

19.00 hrs.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : May I request the hon. Members to restrict their speeches to ten minutes? I suggest that anything extra that they want to say, they can send it to the Minister of Railways in writing. The Ministry will take

due cognisance of whatever representations the hon. Members send to the Railway Minister.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI (Belgaum) : Sir, only yesterday it was decided that each Member should speak for seven minutes so that every Member will get a chance to speak. Otherwise, we will not get the opportunity.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Well, I will be very happy if you take seven minutes. Does the House agree that every Member should speak for seven minutes only?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL (Monghyr) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to request that it should not be less than 10 minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Okay. Nobody would speak for more than 10 minutes.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, nobody spoke from Samajwadi Party. Please invite some one from this party also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have no name from Samajwadi Party. Only Shri Pappu Yadav has given his name. He will certainly be invited to speak.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, take ten minutes, please. But do not exceed the time, please.

Now, Shri Haradhan Roy to speak.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly) : Sir, there is no interpretation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Interpreter should take up the interpretation work.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY (Asansol) : Yesterday, I have notice saying that I would speak in Bengali.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Haradhan Roy, I am sorry to say that there is some problem.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : If there is no interpretation facility available now, then, I can speak in Hindi. I must get ten minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We will ask you to speak next. I do not know about it. I am sorry to say that some break-down has taken place on the interpretation side.

[Translation]

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : I have been a member of this House for the last seven year. I have seen during these years that be it W.R., S.R. or E.R. the general managers of these railways, call the member of Parliament of that area for suggestions and they extend their suggestions in these meetings. I also have been pressing on a suggestion but I am sorry so say that no attention is being paid to that proposal, no action is taken to make that proposal successful. I support the Budget, presented by the Minister of Railways but I want to state that attention is not paid to the proposal of a M.P. on which he always stresses. If no action is taken on his proposal, what is use of inviting him in the meeting and sending a written proposal. Therefore, I would like to request the hon. Minister to pay attention to it. I am not going to say anything on my written proposal but some action must be taken on it.

Raniganj is an industrial area. Coal, Iron, Paper etc. are found there. Previously, there was a line between Calcutta and Raniganj but the Station of Raniganj is not upto the mark. M.L.As and M.Ps. of there, same constituencies catch train from the station. I had given suggestion for stoppage of several trains at Raniganj but none of them was accepted.

Secondly, several trains run from Vardhman to Asansol, from Vardhman to Dhanbad and from Vardhman to Modhupur. Such arrangements should be made that we may get these trains at the interval of every one hour at every station. The platforms at many stations in West Bengal are below the norman height which create difficulties to the passengers while entraining and detraining. The height of these platforms should be increased. There are several stations which lack the facilities like water, waiting room, electricity and toilets. I am not talking of only West Bengal but there are some stations to which you must pay attention.

Likewise, there are railway schools. There is only one railway higher secondary school at Asansol. It is also not upto the mark. Arrangement should also be made for secondary or higher secondary schools to impart edudcation to the children of railway employees. There are hospitals for the employees but there is no arrangement for treatment in these hospitals. There is no doctor, there is no para medical staff and one can not get medicine. All these arrangements should be made there.

You will have to pay attention to railway employees also. If he is married, his son or wife gets employment in the event of his death but if he is unmarried, there is no provision of providing employment to his dependents like his brother, sister to assist his old parents. There should be provision to provide employment to his brother or sister. Such provision exists in other public undertakings but there is no such provision in Railways. I thank the hon. Minister for my suggestion is that brother or sister of the deceased employee who was unmarried, should be provided employment as a token of sympathy to the deceased employee.

I have one more suggestion to make. The employees who were dismissed in loco strike and who were not reinstated should be paid their arrears too. There has been a great delay. Shri Ram Vilas ji has done a good job by regularising the casual labourers.

[Shri Haradhan Roy]

Likewise, Loco staff should be reinstated as well and paid compensation also.

It is said that the Ministry of Railways is not responsible for train dacoities but I would like to suggest that R.P.F. should bear this responsibility. There is arrangement of paying compensation when goods train or parcel goods are looted.

There is a provision for demurrage to compensate the loss. The railways are responsible for any incident of dacoity or death or looting of luggages once person enters the train and travels with a proper ticket. It is the duty of R.P.F. to protect the property of railways. After entering into the compartment the passengers also becomes the property of railways. It is also the duty of R.P.F. to provide him proper protection. The hon. Minister of Railways cannot deny this responsibility of R.P.F. It is useless and incorrect to say that it is the responsibility of the State. This responsibility should be given to R.P.F. Just as the property of railways is protected in the same way this property should also be protected.

I would like to submit that in our area the D.V.C. constructed a line. When Mejaya Power station was shifted from Raniganj. a line was laid there at that time. That line as well as railways both belong to the Central Government. A railways overbridge and shelves for the supply of coal to the said power station. Were constructed. I suggest that the line should be extended upto Bankura for the benefit of the common people. It is not proper that wagons should be used to transport coal for long distances. While trucks are used for short distances. Due to this the incidents of theft and pilfarage take place on a large scale. Minimum wagons should be used to check this smuggling either it is short distance or long distance.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Haradhan Roy, the Bengali Interpreter has come. If you would like to switch over to Bengali, you are most welcome.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Will you please allow me to start from the beginning?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do not start from the beginning. Start from here only.

(Interruptions)

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : I am trying to speak in Hindi.

SHRI E. AHMED (Manjeri) : Sir, Members from Kerala can understand his Hindi.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : I am very happy that they can understand my Hindi.

[Translation]

I would like to say that arrangements made for long distance cannot be applied in the case of short distances. The level of platform should be raised. There are a number of railway stations. Where there is no arrangement of water, waiting room and electricity. I am not talking of entire West Bengal but attention should be paid to some stations. I have sent some suggestions to the hon'ble Minister for the improvement of the railway system, for example the Chitranjan locamotive factory should be further modernised, know-how should be obtained for manufacturing electric engines and engines should not be imported. About the coach and wagon factories either it is in West Bengal or Bihar, Private sector also be involved alongwith the public sector. Import of wagons and coaches should be stopped completely. Hundred per cent wagons and coaches should be manufactured in the country. This is what I would like to submit.

I want to make one more suggestion. Inferior quality of food is being supplied by the railway vendors. It should be ensured that better quality of food is supplied. Moreover, through my letters and here also I have demanded better arrangement for stoppages of trains and platforms. Attention should be paid thereto. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul) : Mr. Chairman Sir, on behalf of the Tamil Manila Congress (Moopanar) Party, I rise to support the Railway Budget for the year 1997-98 presented by the hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. I wish to congratulate the Minister for presenting a pro-poor, pro-development Budget for the second consecutive year.

I am particularly happy to note that there is no hike in the Second Class fare. It is interesting to note that out of eleven million passengers who travel by train everyday, 93 per cent passengers are travelling by the Second Class. So, a large number of passengers who travel by rail are benefited by this Budget. More particularly, the seasoned ticket holders are spared from any hike. This will definitely help the student community, the office goers, the fruit sellers, the vegetable vendors and the milkmen who use this service extensively in suburban areas.

It is understandable to note that Sleeper Class, AC Luxury Class passengers have to pay a little more for comforts and safety which the Railways provide because we have to take care of the inflation and increase in the petroleum prices. Hence a five to ten per cent hike in fares is justifiable. Twelve per cent hike in freight which can have inflationary trend is quite inevitable because of higher cost of running the Railways. Besides, it is also needed to meet increased expenditures of new projects, increase in wages because of the implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission Report and various welfare measures.

The Opposition Members may be disappointed on two counts. Firstly, the UF Government has given a

successful Railway Budget and also a successful General Budget. Secondly, the entire media and the people have been showering praise on these two Budgets.

I would say a few words about the gauge conversion scheme between Chennai Beachline and Dindigul. When the hon. Railway Minister had convened a meeting of Parliamentarians in Chennai last June, he gave a commitment in that meeting that the gauge conversion between Chennai and Dindigul via Trichy will be completed before March 1998. It is interesting to note that in the last Budget speech also, in Page No. 25 the Railway Minister gave an assurance that Chennai-Trichy-Dindigul gauge conversion would be completed by March 1998.

Sir, very recently, that is, about twenty days ago, in Chennai, the hon. Minister of Railways had said that on-going projects in the State would be completed according to schedule and funds would not be a constraint.

I am very much pained to note that this year, for this project, not a substantial amount has been allotted to add to the agony of the people there. In Errata-II, the first phase of the gauge conversion project between Chennai Beach and Trichy which was originally allotted Rs. 142 crore has now been allotted only Rs. 130 crore. I cannot understand the reason behind this. The second phase of the project between Dindigul and Trichy which was originally allotted Rs. 21.65 crore has later, in Errata-II, been allotted Rs.9.65 crore this year. So, it is clearly seen that this scheme cannot be completed before March, 1998 as promised by the hon. Minister of Railways on so many occasions.

If the first phase is completed by allotting Rs. 130 crore, that would not solve the problem. The people travelling from Chennai to Madurai may come up to Trichy and afterwards they may have to take a circuitous route. Similarly, those who come from Trichy would also have to take a circuitous route *via* Chidambaram and Villupuram. This would increase the journey time and also the fare. Annually, the cost would be Rs. 30 crore and people would not take this route. Thus, it would lead to a loss of Rs. 50 crore to the Railways. Hence, I urge upon the hon. Minister of Railways to allot Rs. 150 crore for the first phase between Chennai Beach and Trichy to complete the project before March, 1998 and spend another Rs. 50 crore for the second phase between Dindigul and Trichy. Thus, the whole scheme could be completed on time. I can assure this House and hon. Members that whatever amount is spent on this project could be recovered by way of freight and fare in two years. So, once again, on behalf of the people of my constituency and on behalf of those who come from the southern part of the country, I request the hon. Minister to allot more funds...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI E. AHAMED : You may kindly speak only on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu and not on behalf of the entire southern part of the country.

SHRI T. NAGARATNAM (Sriperumbudur) : What is the harm in it?

SHRI E. AHAMED : In the matter of Railways, we cannot be with you because we have not been given anything.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please wind up.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : I am not saying anything controversial. I would repeat what I was saying. If this scheme is completed, grains, pulses and other things can come to Tamil Nadu directly from other parts of the country.

We talk about national integration on so many occasions. The Railways have a major role in linking the whole of India by railway lines. If we want to strengthen the unity and integrity of the country, we should run a train from Kanyakumari to Srinagar. I am very happy to note that a substantial allocation has been made for the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla line to link the Kashmir Valley with the rest of the country. By doing this alone, without allocating Rs. 55 crore for the Trichy-Dindigul line, the vision of linking Srinagar with Kanyakumari cannot be completed.

Railway lines are just like the nerves in our body. If some part of the nervous system is affected, we call it, 'nervous disorder'.

Sir, it is a real nervous disorder for the railway lines of Tamil Nadu. I am sure the hon. Minister of Railways in his reply tomorrow, will announce the allocation of more funds to this scheme which is more essential. Sir, cities like Madurai, Coimbatore, Trichy and Erode are brimming with activities. Jolarpet station is overworking to the extent of 126 per cent. So also Erode which is working to the extent of 136 per cent. This shows that there is a lot of scope for improvement in railway line of Tamil Nadu.

I would like to mention about Salem-Karur broad gauge conversion project. This covers 100 kilometres. Unfortunately, this scheme has been pending for more than a decade. This gauge conversion project will reduce the distance by 30 kilometres between Madurai, Trichy and Salem. This would also relieve congestion between Salem-Erode section.

I would also like to say that if this line is completed, towns like Rasipuram and Namakkal which are known for poultry breeding, truck body building, sago and starch units would be benefited. At present, there is no rail connection in this area. The project cost is only Rs. 100 crore. The survey was approved by Parliament in 1985-86. Rs. 7.5 lakh was allotted. Again, reapprisal surveys were made in December, 1989. The hon. Minister of Railways in his present Budget says that this

[Shri N.S.V. Chitthan]

scheme was included for survey. I urge upon the hon. Minister of Railways to take up the project immediately.

Sir, weekly sleeper coaches are running to Delhi and Jammu from Madurai. As there is a very heavy demand for more accommodation, a direct train from Madurai should be introduced. A direct train to Bangalore from Tuticorin *via* Madurai should be introduced. Hence, a direct rain must be introduced. Nagercoil-Mumbai line has got very good passenger response. There is a train which runs thrice in a week, but it should be run daily.

In my last speech on the Railway Budget I had stressed the point that there exists a tremendous traffic potentiality between Coimbatore-Mettupalayam. I also stressed that electrification of this line should be taken up without delay and a suburban train should be introduced. Now, I repeat the same demand that it should be taken up for early execution.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHABIR LAL BISHVAKARMA (Hazaribagh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon'ble Railway Minister has stated in railway budget that railway lines would be laid in backward areas on the basis of their economic feasibilities I would like to submit that many areas such as Chhota Nagarpur are lagging behind because there is a single railway line only. Hazaribag and Chhtra also full in the same category. Many kinds of minerals are available in this area. Coal, Mica and other Minerals are transported from there but due to non-availability of railway line these areas are lagging behind. In the budget Hon'ble Railway Minister has made provision for a railways line is Giridih, Kadarma, Barkakana and Hazaribag. I request the hon'ble Railway Minister that this line should be completed expeditiously because people have to cover a long distance to catch trains. A few days back the booking office has been closed there. I request the hon'ble Railway Minister to reopen this office till the railway line is completed. Madhu Van Parasnath adjacent to my area is a famous pilgrimage centre. Followers of Jainism from all over the world came to this place but due to non-availability of railway line with 12 kilometre area they have to face lots of difficulties. Difficulties in this 12 kilometre area are more as sever than compared to any other part of the country. This area is in the grip of terrorism and the pligrims who come from for off places have to face the terrorists, Many of the pligrims are looter. Therefore, there is a need to lay railway line within this 12-13 kilometre area and this needs to be completed.

Sir, I would like to make a suggestion before the hon'ble Railway Minister. Poor and illiterate people travel in our country. When they came to railway stations to catch trains they experience a lots of difficulties as they are illiterate. Therefore, a scheme should be formulated so that it can be ascertained which compartment is ordinary compartment. Here, I would like to submit that the windows of the ordinary compartments should be painted with a particular colour so that illiterate passengers do not feel any difficulty in locating the compartment.

Sir, there is a Bishvakarma temple near Delhi railway station and Delhi is an important place from mythological point of view. There is a mention about it in Mahabharat. Railways had acquired land from this temple in 1928 and on the remaining portion of the land this temple is constructed. There was an agreement that no way the land of this temple would be acquired. Today thousands of travellers stay in this temple but some officers in convinance with some contractors have closed the main gate of the temple due to which lots of difficulties are coming in the way. I request to hon'ble Railway Minister that the main gate of the temple which is being used as cycle stand should be opened for the convenient of the people.

Sir, a few days back hon'ble Railway Minister had made an announcement at many places but that in the case of availability of place repairing snap would be set up there is no place for repairing snap in the eastern railways. There is no repairing shop between Mugal Sarai and Lilua in eastern railways. There was a gride iron factory near Kodarma but that factory has been closed. The people of this area demand that if a repairing shop is set up at any place in eastern railways, it would be beneficial to the people and railways.

Sir, I would like to make one more suggestion that the condition of railway Medical centres is not satisfactory. They do not have modern machines. Doctors do not go there. Therefore attention should be paid it. There is a place names Patratu, that place has a diesel shed but the condition of railways hospital is very pitable. Patients do not get satisfactory treatment there. Hence attention should be paid it. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI P.C. CHACKO (Mukundapuram) : Thank you, Sir.

I stand here to support the Railway Budget presented by Shri Ram Vilas Paswan...*(Interruptions)* It is a political compulsion and not out of merit of the Budget that we support it. Even if it is a good one, I am sure that our friends on the right side will not support this Budget. Unless we decide otherswise, we have to support this Budget. I wish that my affectionate friends, Shri Satpal Maharaj and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan give us an opportunity to whole heartedly support the Budget other than on political compulsions. But unfortunately, we did not get that opportunity. We had sincerely expected that opportunity because you know the problems of States or the country as a whole and the aspirations of the people regarding railway expansion.

The Budget which is presented in this House is a routine exercise. We have nothing new to boast that there is something new in this Budget. The revenue

income of Rs. 26,000 crore and an equal amount of expenditure is a marginal increase over the of last year. Sir, it is an accepted fact that the rate of growth is always proportionate to the rate of investment. How much is the Railways investing for development is the moot point. In the Annual Plan for 1997-98, the amount for the Indian Railways is only Rs. 8300 crore. And what is given in the Budget?

Now, the criticism is very much there and I also share that the railway budgetary support is continuously being decreased and coming down. But more and more public sector organisations especially the Railways are expected to run on commercial lines. The Railways claim that they are working on commercial lines. Then, it is incumbent on their part to find out extra resources and invest more money and come up to the expectations of the people, at least, to an extent.

Sir, since Independence, if we take the States as a whole, we find that railway development is negligible in most parts of the country. I am not only speaking about my State about which we honestly feel that it is neglected. We are not able to invest money according to the local requirements, where it is really necessary and where traffic density justifies such an expansion. What does it mean? How are we going to generate money? The potential for generation to money being limited, we have to find extra resources either by floating bonds or raising loans from outside. Now, you can avail of loans from international market also. Why are the Railways not taking unconventional ideas? This is my main question which I want to put to the Minister of Railways because if we are going on with the routine exercise of making the Railway Budget and when there is a slight improvement of what was done during the last year, then we cannot satisfy the people and we cannot meet their expectations. So, this routine exercise with little bit of dressing here and there will not meet the expectations of the people. We are bound to support and so, we support it. But this kind of a Budget will never satisfy the aspirations of the people. I wish an unconventional and new approach to this problem is found because in the coming years, whichever Government is going to come to power at the Centre and whoever is going to be the Railway Minister, budgetary support is going to decrease. So, the Railways will have to find their own new areas of revenue or other sources of income for investing in Railways. I am not going into greater details of the general aspects of the Railways because I have the duty to say a few points about the rail problems of my State.

There has been continuous clamouring in this House and demands from the Members of my State irrespective of political affiliations for the railway development of Kerala. Every State is demanding the same. So, you may say that there is nothing new. We have been supporting or pressing or putting forward some demands which have been accepted by the Railways and which have been pending for the last many years.

There is a funny or interesting situation in the political scenario. Fortunately, the people who are sitting on the right side of this House have no representation in Parliament from Kerala. They are blank. For the last fifty years, they could not open their account. All the twenty MPs from Kerala are supporting this Government, supporting Shri Paswan and Shri Satpal Maharaj. So, at least, he owes that much to the State of Kerala that all the MPs are supporting this Government. We may be quarrelling among ourselves. That is a different matter. But we are supporting this Government. But what have we got? I would like to put this question very humbly and plainly. We know that he has resource crunch.

He has the resource problem. So, he has to reduce it. We agree with him. But he may reduce it proportionately. In the Railway Budget for the last year, we got Rs. 126 crore.

I am presenting it with a heavy heart. In this year's Budget, it was only Rs. 35 crore. What does it mean? It is only one-fourth of what was in the last year. We can understand his resource crunch and the cut he has imposed on various areas. If that is the difficulty, we understand it. But there is a disproportionate cut. For what?

I would like to make one point very clear before this House. As far as the railway passenger traffic in Kerala is concerned, it is a profitable proposition. I am sure, the Railway Board and the senior officers are aware of it. We make up the loss of the Railways by increasing the goods traffic. But Kerala is a State where the passenger traffic itself is a profitable thing for the Railways. It is something unique. Probably, we cannot cite such an example in the case of other parts of the country. In Kerala, 90 per cent of the railway passengers that originate from Kerala are long-distance passengers.

I would like to quote a few figures which will justify what I am saying. The earnings and expenditure during the last year in the recently formed Thiruvananthapuram Division of the Southern Railway have been Rs. 226 crore and Rs. 73 crore, respectively. Against an expenditure of Rs. 73 crore, a profit of Rs. 226 crore has been generated. The performance index is 37 per cent. I am sure, the Railway authorities are well aware of it. It is not so in the case of many other parts of the country. The passenger traffic itself, not taking into account the goods traffic, is a profitable proposition as far as the Railways are concerned.

We are not in the habit of travelling without tickets. The families who travel from Kerala are long distance passengers. They are spread all over the country. You know that a large number of Keralites are in Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and other parts of the country. They spread the message of national integration. We travel extensively. We have spread out to the whole country.

[Shri P.C. Chacko]

But invariably we travel with tickets. I am not casting an insinuation on anybody. But is it a crime? We have been penalised for that. Why is it happenning in the Railways? It is not so this time only. It has been happening to us repeatedly.

Here, I am not prepared to be subjected to any kind of political considerations. It has been happening many times in the Railway Budget. This discrimination continues. It is an unfortunate situation. So, the on-going projects in Kerala should be viewed in the background of these things. The Railway authorities should not use the same yardstick for assessing the demands for expansion of the railways from all the States in the same manner. Wherever the passenger traffic justifies the investment of more money in the Railway projects, that should be given special consideration.

The distance from Thiruvananthapuram to Cannanore is only 650 kms. It is a small rectangular State. Two segments are there where doubling of the line has not been completed. It has been repeated many a time in this House. I am not making any representation. Today, the most prestigious project of the Indian Railways is the Konkan Railway. Whosoever wants to claim credit he may claim it. The Opposition also has to get the credit because it was started during the time when Shri George Fernandes was the Minister of Railways. It was meticulously followed up by the subsequent Ministers of Railways. Four southern States are sharing it. We are also a party contributing to the share capital of the Konkan Railway. But the Konkan Railway is not touching our State. But we are contributing to the capital of the Konkan Railway. It is going up to Mangalore. But Mangalore is not in Kerala. It is not coming to Kerala at all. We are broad-minded in that way. We thought that we would contribute to the capital. But when the Konkan Railway goes up to Mangalore, that should be extended to the southern part of Kerala by doubling the existing line.

When the Britishers constructed the Shoranur-Mangalore line before 1947, they had acquired sufficient land. So, the land acquisition is not a problem. The doubling of that line at least up to Shoranur will help us in getting the benefit of the Konkan Railway. We have been saying it time and again in this House. The hon. Minister of Railways says, "All right. By the time the Konkan Railway is complete, I promise you that your line will also be doubled." It would cost Rs. 550 crore to double the line upto Mangalore.

Sir, we have been given only Rs. 17 crore. The hon. Minister has been kind enough to announce today that Rs. 17 crore would be increased to Rs. 50 crore.I am very happy that he understood the gravity of the situation. The total expenditure of the project is Rs. 550 crore and if only Rs. 50 crore is allocated per year for this project then it would take ten years to complete this line! What does it mean? Are we asking for more? Tell us; convince us then we would keep quiet.

He said that he would complete the Mangalore line. Suppose he completes the Konkan line up to Mangalore, how are we going to benefit from that? Shri Nitish Kumar is sitting here. This line is going up to his place and we are happy that they are going to benefit from it but the poor people of Kerala who are constributing to the capital of the Railways in a good measure for construction of this railway line are not benefited. So, this is a great injustice. Shri Paswan is very much aware of the omission or the major mistake which as unknowingly crept into this Budget-making exercise. I am happy that he is prepared to take some steps. But I do not know in what form he is going to do that. Even this allocation of Rs. 50 crore would not be sufficient for the completion of the doubling work in Kerala. This is one problem.

Sir, the Thiruvananthapuram-Quilon segment is totally congested because it is super saturated. It is a more than 120 per cent saturated segment. In this segment also the doubling work has not taken place. An amount of Rs. 12 crore has been provided for this whereas for the completion of the project a sum of Rs. 100 crore would be required. How many years would it take? He may convince us about it. There is no politics in what we are saying. All the twenty Members of Parliament from Kerala are supporting this Government. Probably all of them are saying that some consideration should be shown to this matter because we have been ignored. When we are saying that we have been ignored, we are not making a political allegation; we are making a chargesheet against the Government. We are saying this out of our agony and pain.

Sir, to get a ticket from New Delhi to Cochin or Thiruvananthapuram one has to be the in waiting list for 60 days. Many people come to the Members of Parliament to get reservations for their tickets from the special quota or the Headquarters quota or the emergency quota. But now for getting a ticket from New Delhi to Kochi one has to wait for 30 days. We have been requesting the Government for gving us a train from here to Thiruvananthapuram. Last time when we were making our demands here, Shri Paswan was also here and he supported our demands. How has he all on a sudden forgotten what happened last time? After all, these are certain basic obligations which the Railway Board has to fulfil for the State of Kerala the people of which State undertake travel to the maximum extent. The Minister, of course, said that he was going to announce or decide something about starting a new

train to Kerala. These are certain omissions which have unfortunately crept in. It is a country where the Railways are a unifying force; where it is the biggest force of national integration, this kind of an omission would be very painful and that would create more problems for the country.

Sir, I remember what one of our former Railway Ministers, Prof. Madhu Dandavate had once said. He said that where there was no railway, there was a survey. Presently, 11 surveys are going on in Kerala. The Railway authorities have forgotten to make any mention about these projects. In the Minister's Speech there is a mention about all the on-going surveys in other States - about what they would do and when they would complete - but there has been no mention of any survey that is going on in Kerala. Does it mean that it is given to satisfy those people who are agitated here; it is given only to silence those who criticise? If you are serious, then what about the surveys? When are you going to take it up?

One railway line has been allotted from Angamali to Sabarimala. As has been mentioned by Shri V. V. Raghavan, only Rs. one lakh have been allocated for this project. I was there in the Government for some time. I know that if there is a provision, the Minister could give more money. But would that satisfy the people? They are clamouring for more money, but where is the money? This is what has happened. The project for completion of a railway line which requires a minimum of Rs. 500 crore, only Rs. one lakh is provided.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South) : The money allotted to the MPs under the MP Local Area Development fund could be used.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Even if we are prepared to spend all the money from the MP Local Area Development Fund then also it would not satisfy them.

Some new railway lines are essential in our State. It is because the railway lines in Kerala are saturated. If one single train is introduced on these lines then all the trains running on these tracks would come to a grinding halt. Such is the traffic density there. In these circumstances, some new lines, which could be an outlet for the existing lines, can be thought of.

About 50 years back a survey was completed for Thalassery-Mysore line. The survey was completed during the British time. Since 1947, three or four times survey was done for this line but this line is not included. Last year a survey was started for Edappally-Tirur line. It is nearing completion but there is no mention of this line in the speech. Kottayam-Sabarimala line was inaugurated with a lot of fanfare. Its foundation stone was also laid and so many other things were done but nowhere there is a mention of this line. We are happy that at least one line, that is Ankamali-Sabarimala has found a mention in the Minister's speech but looking at its progress, it appears that it will take centuries to complete that line. That is the pittance provided to us.

I will make one more point and then conclude. The Railways have a plan to increase the number of wagons and introduce high capacity engines. The Railways have a proposal to increase the number of coaches from 17 to 21 and from 21 to 25. If high capacity locomotives are introduced and if there is an increase in the number of coaches, it will act as an immediate solution to the problem of Kerala. We are asking for it because we are too much hard pressed for that. You will not be able to complete your project for the next three, four or five years. It is not that you do not have the will to do it but you do not have the adequate finance to do it. So, it means that it will take years and years and it will be prolonged. The immediate relief could be given to the people of Kerala by introducing more number of coaches and more powerful locomotives whether diesel, electric or of other type.

Electric train is a distant dream for the people of Kerala. Recently, it has reached from Coimbatore to Palghat. Palghat is the border of Kerala. So, it has reached up to the border of Kerala. The electrification is to continue up to Cochin or Trivandrum and it requires a huge amount. But what is provided is quite insufficient.

There is one line from Quilon to Sengottai. Last week we celebrated the centenary of that line. The policy of the Railways is to unigauge all the lines, make all the lines as broadgauge. What is provided for that line is only a pittance. Only Rs. 1 lakh is being provided for it. We are being provided a very small amount, be it for doubling, introduction of new railway line or a new train, electrification, improvement in the track or any other thing.

Yesterday, there was a *bandh* in Kerala. Whole of the Northern part of Kerala had observed *bandh* yeasterday. What shall we do? We believe in democracy. Whoever is the Prime Minister or whichever Party is in power, we want to obey the law of the land. We want to take positive decisions. But if we are deprived like this, what else can we do? I am sure the Railway Minister understands the agony of the people of Kerala. I request the Minister to please do something to remove that sort of feeling from the minds of the people of Kerala. Otherwise, people will feel that they are 2000 Kms. away from the capital of this country and they are not cared for. They are not being looked fter properly. If anybody develops this sort of a feeling, can you blame him? People living in far-flung areas of the country should be given their due share.

I fervently hope that on the conclusion of this debate, at least, some of our legitimate demands will be met by the Railway Minister. I request Shri Satpal Maharaj to place these facts before Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and have a discussion with him. The hon. Minister should give assurance to the MPs and people of Kerala which can really satisfy them. Thank you very much for the time given to me to place my views.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV (Purnea) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Sir, I support the budget. I don't want to say anything wrong. I am a Member of the Samajvadi Party. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is not present in the House. I being a Member from Bihar, would like to congraulate him as he has very tactfully tried to fulfil the aspiration of all the Members in general and those from Bihar in particular for which he deserves the best compliments and appreciation under such adverse conditions and presence it is hardly possible for any other Minister to perform their job so beautifully.

In my view Shri Ram Vilas Paswan ji is the most efficient Minister among all the U.F. Minister *...(Interruptions)*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would now like to draw your attention to the areas where 78 percent farmers, labourers and common people live. Keeping in view the convenience of these sections of society very few or virtually no long route trains have been introduced in this budget. It is my earnest request to run more and more long route trains for the benefit of loss privileged sections of society.

Giving by employment opportunities the Railways is the largest organisation. Some time back about as 18 lakh officer and men were working in the Railways and some this number has come down to 16 lakhs. In a department where every year some new trains are introduced, doubling of rail-lines is undertaken and new offices are opened, the number of employees should have gone up but on the coutrary the number of employees has come down. In view of work load of railways and number of trains increasing, the number of G.R.P. personnel should also increase from security point of view as I feel.

The railways are not functioning as an employment generating agency. They are functioning and is heading in the direction like an M.N.C. I feel that if the Railway budget is formulated keeping in view the public interest then thousands of youth could be provided employment.

In terms of security in trains, train journey is not without risk. Everyday we hear the roars of incidents of terrorism, loot-and dacoities and bomb blasts. In these circumstances, the railway department will have to shoulder the responsibility of security in the trians. No matter whether it is performed by the Central Government or by the State Governments but basically it is the duty of the railway department to provide security in the trains.

At present the department of railways has got the largest man power. In these circumstances he will have to see as to how we can optimally utilize the available manpower to boost production in the railway department. Food, clothes, house, medical facilities, education etc. are the basic needs for all human beings. Therefore, minimum possible difference should be kept in the scales of pay of officers and employees whatever facilities could be provided keeping in view the designation and utility of the respective posts.

I would now like to bring your attention to the grave problem of pollution. On the major railway stations where the passengers have to stay for a long time. The train at such stations should be cleaned thoroughly. Going through the whole budget, no specific instructions apoears to have been given in this regard. Keeping in view the interests of all, more unreserved coaches should necessarily be provided in all the trains. Due to non-availability of unreserved coaches in the trains the farmers, labourers and urban people have to free a lot of inconvenience in train journey.

20.00 hrs.

Sir, on all major railway stations the railway tickets are sold in black. Are any steps being taken in this direction? I would like to bring to your kind notice one thing that the collies in connivence with G.R.P. personnel extort double amount for providing space in the unreserved coaches. I would like that this point should be considered seriously. The permission recently given to travel in reserved coaches during the day time has added to the problems of passengers. Therefore, I would like that more coaches should be provided in the train and to facilitate to and fro journey from the capital city to the district headquarters D.H.U. or similar fast trains should be introduced so that people could travel easily.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yadav ji, please conclude, you have got written notes with you. You have delivered a forceful speech you please give the written statement to Shri Satpal Maharaj.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : Yes Sir, I am just concluding. Here we have the Minister of State with us, the administration people are also foresent here. Sir hon'ble Railway Minister has included several long pending proposals of guage conversion and introduction of new trains, yet some proposals have been left. I would like to point out one thing here several proposals relating to the introduction of new trains are being processed since long. One thing more I would like to point out that where the Bulet train was first started in France, Rajdhani Express was also introduced here in India. In France the trains are running at a speed of 250, 300 and 500 kms per hour but here in India the Rajdhani Express is running at the same speech. Sir, you yourself can imagine that a long period of time has since elapsed and France has left forward as compared to our country. In comparison to the speed of trains in France, the speed of trains here in India has not increased and there the trains are running at a speed of 250 to 300-500 kms per hour.

20.02 hrs.

[SHRI P.C. CHACKO *in the Chair*]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, our Railway Minister hails from Bihar. He has paid due attention to several matters relating to Bihar. For instance, I would like to point out that he has given special attention to Nepal side keeping in view the Nepal area of Bihar, boarder area and the surrounding geographical conditions. This is correct, but I am constrained to say that you have done a good job by issuing orders for conducting Survey work for Madhubani-Nirmali to Bhaptiyai but as Ram Vilas Paswan has taken a right step by constructing a big bridge in the Capital Patna. Similary, a new scheme should be formulated for construction of a new bridge for connecting Bhapatiya with Supaul and Saharsa and North Bihar with Kosi and Purnea.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Survey work has been done in our area, when Shri Kalmadi was the Railway Minister. The Hon'ble Minister had conducted survey work from Katihar to Jogbani, Katihar to Saharsa via Purnea Madhepura and Farbisgunj to Katihar and we are thankful to him for this but he has not undertaken survey work from Farbisgunj to Jogbani and Purnea and Jogbani via Madhepura, Saharsa. I would like to know as to why it was discontinued, I would also like to draw the attention of the Minister towards this fact.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, as far as railway crossings are concerned, there are 24,554 unmanned railway crossings in the country. Sir, I want to bring one fact to your notice that you can't escape from your responsibility by simply telling us that due to such a large number unmanned railway crossings accidents cannot be prevented. You also cannot say that such a big number of people cannot be recrusted due to shortage of resources or money hence you cannot recruit chowkidars/guards at the railway crossings. The Railway Ministry or the Minister of Railways cannot wash their hands off responsibility. It is the duty of railway ministry to check the accidents occuring at railway crossings.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, no criterion has been laid down for undertaking computerisation at a railway stations. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister whether he has undertaken computerisation or groupism? As far as Buxar is concerned, Buxar is a district of Bihar and all required equipments items of computers are available there, it fulfills all the conditions but what's the reason for undertaking computerisation even at those places, which do not fulfil all the norms. This is a good thing, but there are many stations like Buxar where computerisation should be undertaken. The hon'ble Minister should pay attention towards the places/stations where computerisation has not been undertaken so far.

The fourth point is about the telephone facility. The hon'ble Minister has constituted a monitoring committee at the regional level. This is a welcome step but whether the monitoring committee has been constituted in order to increase their share? Earlier one person used to get one share but after constitution of Monitoring committee its shares have also got divided. Does the hon'ble Minister himself inspects the monitoring committee from time to time. Otherwise in my opinion earlier 125 shares used to get distributed amongst 100 people, after Constitution of monitoring committee, 135 shares will be distributed among 100 people. Whether you are looking into this fact also?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the fish being served in the trains in sub-standard and causes vomitting. You please trend in Rajdhani Express and see. I don't want to discuss about catering arrangements because the entire House knows that the food served in the trains is non-consumable. Such is the condition of food in Rajdhani Express now-a-days. I don't want to go into catering facilities in other trains. As far as the condition of Bihar is concerned, there is no such alternative arrangement there. The Minister wants to make these arrangement in 2-tier, 3-tier or air conditioned coaches but I want that more and more unreserved/genral compartments should be attached/connected because if you see the condition of Bihar, then you will understand. In Bihar, if there is a room for 100 persons, 500-600 people enter the compartment. No alternate arrangements have been made there.

As far as introduction of 3-tier A.C. is concerned, it is good but under which scheme you propose to introduce this system. After conducting many surveys, so many schemes have been introduced. Our United Front Government and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan stood candid but I want to ask that since the Minister is approving all these schemes in this financial budget, what time limit is being fixed in this regard and the time by which these would be completed?

I will raise one or two more points and will conclude my speech. The Minister has said that he wants to recruit the diploma holders. The officials of the Administration only can tell him the exact number of diploma holders. You, yourself can find it out. If some orders are placed with the diploma holders, they may not be able to know what has been cooked. I am unable to understand who these diploma holders are, whether they are one who take bribe or they are ordinary diploma holders. I think there is nothing like that.

There is a need of doubling the Borsoi railway line from Barauni to Katihar. Discussion is going on in the entire house on the issue of doubling of railway line. Doubling of railway line has been undertaken from Barauni via Katihar and Guwahati and we travel towards Howrah through the main lane. What are the reasons for which the hon'ble Minister is making alternate arrangements for doubling the line from Barauni to Katihar?

Construction of a birdge on Ganga in Patna has been taken up in this financial budget. I would like to know if this is taken up, whether any scheme pertaining

[Shri Rajesh Ranjan Alias Pappu Yadav]

to connecting North Bihar with South Bihar, is with the Railway Minister. Since he is a senior member he may remember...*(Interruptions)* at that roads were to be constructed on the big bridges and this scheme was taken up during that period. If the railway lines also would be laid/constructed on those big bridges and doubling of both would be undertaken then I would like to give a suggestion that since a new bridge is being constructed with a huge cost on Ganga in Bhagalpur, if the hon'ble Minister so desires a scheme can be formulated for construction of railway bridge on the said new road bridge in Bhagalpur. One has to travel atleast 300-400 kms additional to reach Kosi, Purnea, Madhepura, Saharsa, Madhubani areas in North Bihar upto Sahibganj South area, Santhal Pargana and one can travel these places in less time with comparitively less amount by utilising the above railway bridge constructed on the road bridge.

As far as Manmanakhi Daal is concerned, I have told about it earlier also. I want to say a few words about my area...*(Interruptions)* I am concluding. Manmanakhi Junction is in my constituency. Last time a survey was conducted from Pursola to Sahrasa via Bihar ganj. I don't know by when this survey work would be completed. But I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that construction of railway track from Manmanakhi junction to Jalalgunj via Damerva, Jalalgarh, Baisi, Daikola should be included in the new survey. It would be an achievement for our area Purnea which is backward, poor and which is situated on the border of Nepal and Bengal. This would connect Diakola with West Bengal. Madam Chairperson, I think you may be knowing Dumria. You may know Dumrav Raja in Bihar. Dumaria is in Buxar. This is situated in Bihar. There are only two factories in Dumrao. There are several railway stations whose express trains halt however, and Shramjivi Express trains do not stop at this station. We have given in writing several times in movements have also being carried out for this...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now please sit down, if you have anything more to say, you please give it to the hon. Minister in writing...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI (Howrah) : Sir, he should be allowed to speak, he is mentioning so many good things..*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : This will be a big thing. I emphatically demand that some new arrangement should be made for this.

There is Rukol halt in our area where tickets are rold in good number. This halt also fulfills all the requirements for bring a regular railway station. But it still continues to be a halt. I personally request you that the Rukol halt should be converted into a regular railway station. I have written several times to Railway Ministers Shri Kalmadiji and Shri Jafar Sharif Sahib and even launched a movement to press for this demand. Gulabbagh is a big mandi (market) of Bihar and West Bengal. An overbridge needs to be constructed at Gulabbag. I have made this demand several times to construct over bridges at Gulabbagh especially at in Purnea. However this request has always been put off saying Bihar Government should first give half of the cost of construction. Who should ask the Bihar Government to provide half of the construction cost? I asked the hon'ble Minister to get it done and ...*(Interruptions)* This is my heartfelt desire. Our Minister and this House talk so much about the poor, backward people and labourers...*(Interruptions)* I will conclude. Our Minister is showing so much concern for the poor and the entire country is concerned for the labourers and farmers. However, Bihar is an area where no development work has been carried out till date. The area we hail from is connected by the river Kosi and other rivers but no big or express trains run in this area. I would urge the Railway Minister to do something for us by formulating a new package for Purnia, Saharsa, Katihar, Sukil, Munger areas and the area adjoining Ganga and that of Nepal and Bengal.

I wanted to make many suggestions but I am being repeatedly asked to conclude. In this House sometimes somebody goes to sleep, while there are others who prefer to keep mum, We must not follow suit. It should not never happen. Chairman Sir, I convey my sincere thanks to you for according me an opportunity to speak. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI E. AHAMED : Mr. Chairman, Sir, appreciating the position of the time constraint, I will be just confining only on certain points by making certain observations.

According to the Railway Minister, the Railways cannot be treated as a purely commercial concern and it must fulfil social obligations. But it has already been found and already many Members have mentioned here that when the budgetary support is declining every year, how we will be able to go ahead with the idea of making it to be an organisation to fulfil the social obligations. As a matter of fact, the Minister and the Railways are really having a tight rope walking between an organisation of commercial concern and that of a social concern.

I would like to bring to your kind notice how this growth of Railways has been affected in the whole network. There is no rationale in the allocation of the funds to the Railways. And also the focus has already been diverted from the real necessary need based area. For example, I would just like to mention here that in

1950-51, the passenger kilometre index was 100 and it increased to 448 in 1995-96, it had gone up more than four times. At the same time the capital input index shows that the number of coaches in 1950-91 was only 100 whereas it increased to 227. So, when the passenger per kilometre had gone up from 100 to 448, the number of coaches had increased only from 100 to 227. And the net tonnage kilometre was 100 in 1950-51, and it increased to 620 in 1995-96, that is an increase of more than five times. But, at the very same time, the wagon capacity had increased from 100 in 1950-51 to 256 in 1995-96, that is only one and a half times more. So, I do not know how the Railways will be able to face the thrust and the pressure which has been on them. I would like to mention that even the running track kilometre was 100 in 1990-91, whereas in 1995-96 it was only 136. So, the running track kilometre had increased hardly by fifty per cent, not even by fifty per cent. This is an unfortunate situation here.

What is the Budget allocation? The Budget allocation is also going down considerably. I do not know how the hon. Minister will be able to achieve his declared policy of making it to be a sole organisation fulfilling the social obligations.

Sir, in the first Plan, the Plan share of the Railways was 11.1 per cent and in the Eighth Plan it was 6.3 per cent. From 11.1 per cent it had come down to 6.3 per cent. Even in the Eighth Plan, the outlay was Rs. 27,220 crore, out of which the market borrowing was Rs. 3,000 crore. What was the budgetary support? The budgetary support was only 19.8 per cent. Sir, every year it has been going down. Even in the Annual Plan 1996-97, I had seen that the total provision was Rs. 8,300 crore, out of which the budgetary support was only Rs. 1,439 crore.

I do not know how the Railways will be able to withstand the thrust and the pressure that has been given.

Again, Sir, how is the pattern of investment? The pattern of investment is also very much declining and it is also a matter of great concern.

Then coming to track renewal, in 1996-97, a provision of Rs. 1,516 crore was made. What was the increase, in 1997-98? It is Rs. 1,680 crore. This is the track renewal record of the Indian Railways! How are we to go further? I do not know.

For rolling stock, the provision was Rs. 2,021 crore in 1996-97 and it has been reduced considerably to Rs. 1,208 crore. This is the rolling stock position. The allocation for workshop and other things has gone down from Rs. 125 crore to Rs. 120 crore.

For electrification only, there is an increase from Rs. 310 crore in 1996-97 to Rs. 351 crore. There is an increase in the allocation for the new lines also. It has gone from Rs. 284 crore to Rs. 400 crore. In all the other things, there is a decline in the allocation.

Moreover, in 1996-97, for computerisations, this country was carving out and amount of Rs. 63 crore which has been further reduced to Rs. 35 crore. This is unfortunately the situation in the whole of Railways. I do not know how we will have a rationale in the allocation for the investment as well as for the production unit. How will we be able to achieve this novel and the oft-repeated idea to fulfil the social obligation in the society? At the very same time, when we speak about the new lines, my friend Shri P.C. Chacko when he was sitting here, made his remarks so far as my State is concerned.

Sir, when I mentioned about my State, I will be speaking with a heavy heart and I will have to support this Government. We, the 20 Members of the Lok Sabha from Kerala State will be supporting this Government. We will continue to support. In Rajya Sabha also, we will be supporting this Government. I do not know why a State has been neglected like this. We have already mentioned and we have brought it to the notice of the Government. Is it because he is sitting in the North and he cannot see the Southern most State of the country? And those who are sitting in the North cannot see what is down South. Is it that?

Sir, whether Rama rules the Railways or Rahim rules the Railways, Kerala has the same fate, whether it was last year or it is this year. Last year, at least we had a relief that Rs. 127 crore was allotted. This time it has been further reduced to Rs. 32 crore. What happened to the mandarins sitting in the Ministry of Railways? I do not know.

The South Indian Railway was formed 100 years ago. The then Madras-Mangalore Mail was introduced in 1900. Many of those people who are just doing the work of the Railways do not know that in 1900 in the history of the Indian Railways the Mail service was started from Chennai to Mangalore. The number one Mail was from Chennai to Mangalore and the number two Mail was from Mangalore to Chennai. These were the two Mails in the first mail service in this country. They have been going from Palghat, then going up to Mangalore. That was the lifeline of the entire region of Malabar. What is the position now? My friend Shri Chacko has said about that. I do not want to repeat it. But I would ask; Will they be able to finish the doubling of this railway line within the next 10 years? Why? Are we not also paying the tax? Are we not the citizens of this country? Why should we be penalised for that? What is our fault? Why has it not been given? Is it only because that Malabar happened to be a part of the erstwhile Madras Province? Is it because of that? What is the entire position of Kerala? We have been given only one train. When we ask for more trains, there is no train. When we ask for more new lines, there is now

[Shri E. Ahamed]

new line. When we ask for the modernisation, there is no modernisation. What is the amount of gravity of neglect? I would say with your kind permission only one instance.

Seven years back, work started on a most important briges, Feroke bridge, on this line. Only now we are getting the benefit of what the Britishers had done those bridges are in Malabar area. Even now it has not been completed. Whenever we ask those people, who are sitting at the Chennai Office they say that: 'we are doing it'. Where are they doing? Last time I was told that the Contractor had gone. If one contractor had gone will there be no other contractor? Is it the system in the Railways? The Feroke bridge has been neclected for the last six years. A railway station which the former Minister had promised coming over there, is to be remodelled because it is such an important station. What happened to it? Nothing was done. As rightly pointed out by my friend, Shri Chacko, many surveys were done. What is the fate of the Mysore-Tallichery railway line? It was no less a person than Shri Jagjivan Ram who had given an assurance to the people of Malabar speaking in Tallichery, in my own presence, when I was a student, that the Mysore-Tallicherry rail line would be coming. Where is that promise? Where is that railway line? There is nothing. What about the survey started in Kerala? For example, in my own constituency, in the Feroke-Nilambur survey. If some diversion is to be made, we can discuss about it. What happened to it? Many assurances have been given on the floor of this House by the former Ministers. What have we got back? There is nothing. A number of solemn assurances were given on the floor of this House.

The Tirur-Edapally route is another issue. Out of the requirement of Rs. 500 crore to provide a railway line to Sabarimalai, we have got Rs. lakh! What are we going to do with this money? An amount of Rs. 300 crore is estimated for the Mangalore-Shoranur line. We have been given Rs. 17 crore but the hon. Minister was pleased to say that he would increase it to Rs. 50 crore. Even if it is Rs. 50 crore, as rightly pointed out by my friend Shri Chacko, it will take another ten years to complete. Are we to just live with this reality? What is the fault that we have committed? What is the wrong that we have done? We do not know.

Sir, there is a saying in Malayalam, 'Devam Prasathichaalum Poojari Kodukilla'. Even if the God will bless you, the priest will not allow it. The Chairman of Railway Board may say that: 'We will give you', but the officer will say, 'No'. If the hon. Minister will say that: 'We will give you', his Deputy will say, 'No' because there is no line and say: 'You wait till the Konkan Railway comes'.

Now, we are going to make an announcement. The people will go to the churches, temples and mosques and say, 'Oh Almighty Lord, let the Konkan railway come and we may save the Malabar area'. Is it so? How long are we to say it? I am speaking everything with a heavy heart. I only urge the hon. Minister of Railways to do something. I do not want to say more because the hon. Minister knows the depth of our feelings as to how far we got hurt.

Day before yesterday in the entire Malabar area, we all protested and observed a total *bandh* and half of the population of Kerala observed a *bandh*. In a democracy, should it not be positively responded to? I hope that the hon. Minister who is a democrat, a man who can very well measure the sentiments and the feelings of the people and the country will see to it that these are taken up immediately. Even though we are in the Southern part of the country, he usually comes there. When he was not a Minister, he gave a lot of assurances and when he is a Minister, he is giving us assurances too. I am sure my friend, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan will stand up and say that the injustice done will be rectified justice will be done to Kerala, particularly to the Malabar area.

With these few words, with a heavy heart, I support the Railway Budget.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to support this Railway Budget which is presented by our dynamic hon. Minister of Railways.

Railway is a symbol of national integration. It unifies entire India politically, socially and culturally.

Railways connect the entire India, from south to north and from east to west. This year our dynamic Railway Minister has presented the Budget with an outlook for the welfare of the backward regions. At the time of presentation of the Budget, the hon. Minister, in his Budget Speech, mentioned that railway is not only a commercial institution but an efficient and better welfare organisation to develop the backward regions. On that consideration, in the present Budget, more money has been allocated for the development of the backward regions, such as, the North-East States, Kashmir, some parts of Bihar adjacent to Nepal border and Uttrakhand. I whole heartedly welcome the decision taken by our hon. Minister of Railways. But I request him to consider the backwrd regions in the light of the whole country.

Backward region means not a particular State or a particular region or a particular area of a State. Backward region should be considered in the light of the whole of India. I would like to mention one of the most backward areas of our country, which I represent, that is, the Sunderbans area where the people belong to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities. The Sunderbans people are the real *dalit* people and the *pichhre varg* people. They are living there fighting with the man-eater Royal Bengal tigers and big crocodiles. They are the downtrodden people to the entire country.

But, in spite of that, they are feeding the Calcuttans. They are supplying rice, vegetables, milk and milk products, fish and some many other articles to Calcutta everyday. If we, the people of the Sunderbans, discontinue the supply of food and other essential commodities to the Calcutta city, the people of Calcutta will suffer an irreparable loss and much injury. But, of course, we do not want that.

I would like to mention the name of Hasnabad which is one of the gateways of Sunderbans and which is only 75 kilometres from Calcutta city. From Sealdah to Hasnabad, it is only 75 kilometres. Out of these 75 kilometres, 25 kilometres from Sealdah to Barasat have already been electrified but the remaining 50 to 52 kilometres has not yet been electrified. From Barasat to Hasnabad, it is only 50 to 52 kilometres. I demand and urge upon the Railway Minister for the electrification of the Barasat-Hasnabad section.

There are two magic words in the Railways One is survey and the other is viability. With full responsibility, I say that survey regarding the electric works has already been conducted in the Hasnabad-Barasat section. I would like to mention here that surveys regarding the electrification work in three sections of the Sealdah Division of the Eastern Railway were conducted and completed one or two years back. One is the Barasat-Hasnabad section, the other is the Ranaghat-Bongaon section, and the third is the Ranaghat-Gade section. The second and the third have been included in the present Budget for electrification. I do not know what is my fault and the fault of the downtrodden people of the Sunderbans that the first one has not been included in the present budget for electrification, even though the survey was done along with the other two sanctions two years back.

Sir, having a survey is no problems. If the hon. Minister of Railways desires and if he is kind enough to take steps for the electrification of the Hasnabad-Barasat section, that survey may be upgraded and it may be revised. It has already been done. I know as to the amount of survey involved. It may be only upgraded and revised. That is not a big matter.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways to another aspect. The people of West Bengal, Kerala, Himchal Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and so many States are feeling that they are being deprived by the Railway Department for decade after decade and they are neglected in the railway map of India. I urge upon the hon. Minister of Railways to take positive and suitable steps to try to remove the plight of those States so far as Railways are concerned.

I will only mention some projects of West Bengal which have been pending for years together. They are the Belurghat-Ekalachi, Digha-Tumlukh and Howrah-Amta projects. These projects are pending for years together. The people are feeling frustrated. They do not know as to when these projects will be completed and executed. I also mention that some work should be done immediately by the Railway Department on the construction of new railway line from Tarakeshwar to Arambagh. Tarakeshwar is a place where thousands of pilgrims and devotees visit the temple there. The doubling work between Sonarpur and Canning and between Barnipur and Lakshmikantpur may be taken up. The Sonarpur -Canning line may be extended up to Sonakhali and Dhomakhali which is included in the Sundarbans area.

I congratulate and pay my gratitude to the hon. Minister of Railways for taking a bold decision for absorbing all casual workers in the Railways. It is a just and good decision.

Another matter which is coming in the limelight regarding Railways is that everyday hon. Members are agitating regarding robbery and looting in the Railways in different States when the trains pass through those States. The Railways should come forward and in liaison with the other concerned Departments take steps so that the looting and robbery in the Railways is prevented immediately.

I would like to mention some problems of the city of Calcutta. Calcutta is one of the greatest cities of our country. It is not only the heart of Eastern India but also of the entire country. One hon. Member mentioned about the number of daily commuters who are coming to Calcutta daily. But that is not the real number because there is a lack of facilities in the Suburban trains in Calcutta. They are not getting so many facilities like Mumbai. There is a lack of suburban train facilities. That is why nearly about one crore daily commuters are coming to Calcutta and are plying by overcrowded buses, sometimes sitting on the roof of the bus as there is no proper facility of suburban trains in Calcutta and in Howrah and Sealdah stations. Daily near about one crore people come to Calcutta as daily commuters to earn their bread and livelihood. I urge upon the hon. Minister that more money should be allocated for the Calcutta Metropolitan Transport Project, Circular Railway and for the Metro Railway. More money should be allocated in the greater interests of the country.

Lastly I urge upon the hon. Minister to take some important steps. In the Budget speech he mentioned before the House that the Railways would take care of people of backward classes and of people backward areas who are living in remote and farthest corners of the country so that they are brought into the mainstream of our country. There are lakhs of *dalits* and other Scheduled Tribe people who are living in the Sundarbans area. If there is no Railway facility how can they come and be brought within the mainstream of the country, that is Calcutta?

Sir, it is a tourist centre. It is a big forest. It is famous for the Royal Bengal Tiger and it is famous for the crocodile. It is a tourist centre and many foreigners are coming to visit the Sundarbans.

[Shri Ajay Chakraborty]

It will be useful for that purpose also. So, I urge upon the hon. Minister of Railways. I have met the hon. Minister of Railways so many times. I draw his kind attention to the plight of our people regarding the railways. So, I invite and urge upon the Minister of Railways that he should declare it before the House. I think that he will declare at the time of his reply about the electrification of Barasath-Hasnabad section.

I again urge upon the Minister of Railways that he should consider the electrification of Barasath-Hasnabad section which is only 50 to 52 Km and the survey has already been done two years back. He should take a note of it. I hope the Minister of Railways, who is representing the *dalit* people and fighting for the *dalit* people year after year and is famous for that, should do something to help the *dalit* and down-trodden people of the Sundarbans and make arrangements for the electrification of the Barasath-Hasnabad section immediately. He should declare before the august House what steps he is going to take.

I thank the Chair for having given me this opportunity.

[Translation]

SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHAUHAN (Sriganganagar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the budget presented by Hon'ble Minister of Railways. Some Hon'ble Members have suported this budget while some have opposed it. I also oppose its certain provisions.

Hon'ble Minister of Railways have made announcement in regard to several railway works to be undertake in Bihar, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu but he has not announced even a single railway line for Rajasthan. No new rail line has been announced for the BJP ruled States or where BJP is extending support to the Government. I mean to say that there is no provision for new line for Rajasthan, Delhi and Maharashtra. Keeping in view all these things I would like to submit that he has not made announcement for guage conversion in Rajasthan. In this way gross injustico has been done towards Rajasthan. This is neither a blanced nor a development oriented budget. It is election budget. I would like to say that with the increase in Petrol prices the rail fare would further increase. Fare for sleeper class has been increased by 5 percent and freight by 12 percent, the Members of Parliament have been taken for a ride because the fare of first class, two-tier, three-tier etc. of our conditioner class has been increased by 10 percent which is equal to 30 percent. Here, I would like to cite an example that the fare of first class air conditioner has been increased from Rs. 1890 to 2270, Second Class A.C. from Rs. 1010 to 1235 and ACC three-tier from Rs. 640 to 830. Thus you have put burden on common people. Hike in freight rates has affecting the common man.

Mr. Chairman, there is an indication of increase in the fare of Shatabadi Express and Rajadhani Express by 10 percent which is equal to 30 percent. I request the Hon'ble Minister of Railways that he should reconsider it. De reserve posts lying vacant in railways should be filled up and casual labourers should be regularised. Hon'ble Minister of Railways has stated in his speech that Planning Commission has approved Rs. 4400 for the development of railways. This amount is not sufficient. I request to you that you should make recommendation to Planning Commission to provide more funds for railway budget. Railways plays an important role in the agriculture, Industry and economic fields. Railway is a Welfare Institution. Railway Budget should be given due consideration as the general budget.

Mr. Chairman, transportation of goods through railway which was 70 percent in 1951-52 has reduced to 20 percent. As such, how would railway progress? I extend my congratulations to Hon'ble Minister for introducing new direct train from Sri Ganganagar to Haridwar. On the very first day this train reached four hours late. What would be its future? My Parliamentary Constituency, Sri Ganganagar is on Indo-Pak Border. Barring, Sri Ganganagar there is no train from Mandi to Vindhya in this area. Direct rail service should be provides from Sri Ganganagar to Ajmer and a direct train be introduced from Anupgarh, Suratgarh, Hanumangarh, Sangaria etc. or air conditioned and ordinary coaches should be attached to trains from Delhi directly.

Rail service from Sri Ganganagar to Mumbai has been scrapped. Therefore, a direct train from Delhi to Mumbai Via Sri Ganganagar should be introduced or two AC and two ordinary bogies should be attached with trains running from Mumbai to Delhi via Sri Ganganagar. Hon'ble Minister had gone to Udaipur on 16th September. There he made an announcement to the effect that concession would be provided to the acridated Journalists of district in the railway journey. He had stated that this scheme would be implemented by November but he has not issued order so far. Before concluding I request to the Hon'ble Minister that in 1978, 1984 and 1992 announcements were made to convert metre guage line into broad guage line from Sri Ganganagar to Swaraj Shahar. Despite bringing proposal to this effect three times in Lok Sabha that line has not been started so far. You have included this proposal in the budget of 1995-96. The length of metre guage line from Sri Ganganagar to swaraj Shahar is 160 Kilometres. This line should be started immediately so as to provide rail service upto Sri Ganganagar district which is based on agriculture and industry.

Earlier also, I had requested you to set up Railway level crossing. I had also requested you in this regard

in the meeting of Northern Railways and many a time I have sent written request to you. The new Railway crossings be sanctioned for Mandi Yard Raisingh Nagar and 12 tike and Faujuwala of Shri Ganganagar and Manwa, Dholipal, Bangulawali and Ramgarh (Mohar) of Hanumangarh district. Mandi Yard Raisingh Nagar is situated on both sides of railway line. There is only one railway crossing. One more railway crossing should be sanctioned there. The biggest fair of North India is organised in Nawan, Dholipal, Ramgarh area of Hanuman district. This fair is organised in the name of Jahar Ver Gogaji where the devotees of Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh come to worship. Railway crossing may also be sanctioned there. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI HINDU RAO NAIK NIMBALKAR (Satara) : Mr. Chairman, I am thankful to you that for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. In the last Budget presented by Hon'ble Ram Vilas ji, Maharashtra was ignored. We had criticised that within the Party. But we praise it with open hearts, welcome it and also thank that when you were presenting the Budget here, the people of Baramati-Launad-Phaltan area were rejoining, they were celebrating Diwali there. For the last 40-50 years there had been agitation in that area for this dam. The said area was represented by a great leader of India, Shri Chavan fortunately now I have got the opportunity of representing that area. This question has not been solved for the last 50 years. I had raised this matter on July 23, 1996 under Rule 377 and I insisted on it. I had also tried to raise this matter in the supplementary Budget also and insisted to Ram Vilas ji for it. In regard to Baramati-Launad-Phaltan many leaders helped us including the members of my Party, former Prime Minister Shri Chandra Shekharji, Former Minister of State for Railways, Shri Bhakta Charan Das ji the officers of Railway Department. All of them guided us and helped us. With this I would try to raise some points in my own mother tongue. There are two-three points.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Is no gateman deployed there for duty during day-time?

SHRI HINDU RAO NAIK NIMBALKAR : The gateman is deployed from 7.00 A.M. to 7.00 P.M. But at night the gate is closed due to where ten villages of that side remain in accessible during night. No guest can go. Neither any one can jump the wall. If there is delivery case or an accident, no one can go even upto Rahamatpur.

*Mr. Chairman Sir, the demand for overbridge is being continuously made since 1975. On 15th June, 1975 there was an accident at Shirdhon level crossing gate 35 persons died in this accident 45 persons lost their livelihood. Their life was completely destroyed. There were accidents at 3 level crossing gates at Borgaon, Shirdhon and Katapur in Koregaon Taluka. The gates were in reinstalled after the accident. But the situation today is that gateman are deployed there on duty from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Once the gate is closed at night many villages of this Taluka namely Katapur, Gogawali Wadi, Godsewadi, Mangalapur, Shirdhon, Tandulwadi and Wathar Shiroli are cut off from other areas. Even if there is an emergency case of delivery it is not possible to take the patient from these towns to Rahimatpur. In an emergency case, it is not possible to take a patient to the hospital. Though the demand for overbridge has been made since 1975, so for it has not been constructed. Today also I would like to make the demand for overbridge at Shirdhon in this house. But before this demand is fulfilled, it is necessary to urgently post watchman during the night at Shirdhon level. crossing. Presently, if a guest comes he cannot reach these villages. Emergency case cannot be taken to hospital. Even it there is accident there, it is not possible to take patients to Rahimatpur hospital once the gate is closed.

Phaltan-Pandharpur-Kurduwadi railway line is being demanded since British times. I would like to point out that the lands have been acuired by the Railways. The Railways are having necessary revenue documents of this land. But I do not know whether the Railways are aware about the location of the land in their possession. Railway officials do not speak anything in this connection. We again raised the question of Phaltan-Pandharpur-Kurduwadi railway line. But the proposal is pending over the question of acquisition of land at Kurduwadi. Therefore, it is necessary to take up Phaltan-Pandharpur-Kurduwadi railway line. Pandharpur is the sacred deity of Maharashtra. Every year nearly 20 lakh devotees of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh visit Pandharpur. For 'ekadashi' is every month a few lakh people visit Pandharpur. 'Varkaris' from western Maharashtra and Konkan go to Pandharpur every year. So, if Pandharpur-Kurdhuwadi railway line is constructed it will enable lakhs of 'Varkaris' to reach Pandharpur without any difficulty. So, I would like to request the Government to take up Phaltan-Pandharpur railway line which is being demanded since the British days.

The condition of Satara railway station is really deplorable. Reservation facility is not available at Satara railway station. Even if an M.P. has to travel from Satara, he has to telephone Hubli station for reserving his ticket. From Hubli one can get ticket for Mahalakshmi or some other train. So, I demand that reservation facility for all trains should be available at Satara. Mahalakshmi Express reaches Satara at 11 o'clock in the night. Near Satara there is a railway station called 'Neera' which is old and caters to the needs of several talukas of Satara. I would like to demand that Mahalakshmi Express should have a halt at Neera.

I would like speak a word about Kolhapur. Recently the Government has started air services at Kolhapur. Kolhapur is developing fast as a big industrial city. Kolhapur has its own importance. One of the "three and

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Marathi.

[Shri Hindurao Naik Nimbalkar]

half Peethas" Mahalakshmi Peeth is there in Kolhapur. The descerants of Chatrapati Shivaji reside in Kolhapur. As you are plying Shatabdi Express between Mumbai and Pune, I request Shatabdi Express should run between Mumbai and Kolhapur. I am sure that this Shatabdi Express between Mumbai and Kolhapur will definitely prove to be revenue earning for the Railways.

I would like to make another request to Hon. Minister. As you have completed several projects, the name of Ram Vilasji is very popular in several areas as Smt. Indira Gandhi's name was very popular. Even though I belong to Shiv Sena let me point out that Ram Vilasji is becoming very popular in several areas. However, let me say that what you are giving us is very meagre. It is like serving some food to a person and just take it back he starts eating it. While the estimate is of 75 crores of rupees. You have allocated openly 1 lakh of rupees. If inauguration is to be done, this amount won't be adequate for releasing its advertisement. Regarding this Budget. I would like to make only one request. But I hope that I am not misunderstood and what I say is not wrongly interpreted.

[Translation]

Please don't take otherwise what I want to say to you, I would rather, hope you will take them easy.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : First please get the budget passed lest there may not be any funds available.

SHRI HINDURAO NAIK NIMBALKAR : We want that you may take our utterances easy. Here two Ministers of railways are present which belongs to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. I would also like to say to my sisters sitting here not to take my views in bad sense. Day before yesterday I heard a song.

21.00 hrs.

Sir, day before yesterday I heard a song which goes like this-"Ek Chumma de de uske badle mein U.P. Bihar le le." Now two Ministers in the Railway Ministry came from such generous states. We people belong to Shiv Sena. We are also praising him. We would like to have friendly terms with him. Therefore, we expect him to give something to me in his budget. Once again, I thanking him and expressing my good wishes to him, resume my seat.

SHRI PARASRAM MEGHWAL (Jalore) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Railway budget but the interests of lower level employees have not been taken into account in the rail budget. Whether there is a railway accident or derailment, lower level employees like Gangman, have to attend to their worker anywhere. Be it winter, summer, rains or chilling cold weather, they have always got to be ready for the Railways. Most of the time these poople have to stay in forests. Their quarters are in forest where no schools available for education of their children nor any hospitals. Through you I would like to request the Minister of Railways that some provisions be made in this rail budget for those lower level employees so that their children can get education and they must get some facilities for their health. They have to travel distances of 50 or 60 kilometres with their children away to get treatment for their children but there is no facility available for them, so they have to return back disappointed and they have to got their children medically checked in the private hospitals where they have to pay even medicine charges and doctor's fees apart from spending on fares for their journey to and fro. Some provisions should be made in this rail budget for their convenience because these people are always ready for serving the railway.

Mr. chairman, Sir, secondly honourable Minister has made a number of announcements regarding track conversion. I welcome those announcements but there are some irregularities in those announcements. Such as one particular rail link has been provided at both ends but a 200 kilometres stretch in between has been left out. This will cause great difficulty to those poor people because they will be cut off from both ends. The direct trains meant for their area will not be available to them and it will cause great difficulty to them. They are also part of this country. They are also poor. Therefore, I request that this should not be done. Those parts which have not been touched by the rail link or broad-gauge should be connected. They will shower their good wishes on you. Hon'ble Minister of Railways has always shown his concern for the poor and have worked for downtrodden and backwards people. I welcome the works done for these people. If the backward areas in which the developmental work is at stand still in the absence of railways, are provided with rail facility, then they will be benefited and they will remains connected with railway forever and in this process will certainly make progress.

Hon'ble Minister of Railways has made a number of announcements also. Besides he has said in his budget speech that he has not increased the fare but I would like to say that it is correct that he has not increased freight charges on urea but he has certainly increased the freight charges on coal which is used in the making of urea and has increased the freight charges on all the ingredients used in the manufacture of urea which will certainly affect the prices of urea. Whether other items, on which freight charges have been increased, will not increase the price of Urea? The Minister of Railways and the Prime Minister both are well-wishers of the farmers and the Prime Minister announces that he is a son of a farmer and that they have not increased the freight charges on Urea. Urea is not made of just one component. They have increased the freight charges on all the items used in manufacturing of Urea. Freight charges on all the raw material have been increased. He makes

announcements keeping in view the interests of agrarian people but the result thereof does not favour them. Either he should not make such announcements or should ensure that their real benefits reach to those people.

I have one more request to make about Navjeevan Express which runs from Chennai to Ahmedabad, if he extends this upto Abu road then people will be highly benefitted from this. People of Western Rajasthan who have their business in South, will be greatly benefitted from this because they lost most of their luggage while shifting from one train to another or find their luggage lifted by lifters. Many a time their pocket are picketed. If this train extended upto Abu Road then these people will be greatly benefited and the recurrence of such incidents will also get reduced in number.

Hon'ble Chairman, I thank you very much for giving me time to speak.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : Thank you very much, Sir. It is a great privilege to take part in the discussion on Railways.

As has been pointed out by many of the hon. Members, the Railways is one way which connects the national integration and does everything to connect people from different areas. I would have liked to speak in Hindi but I do not take risk at this time because I may go a bit slow like some of the passenger trains. So, I would not like to take this opportunity, to take a risk in that nature.

I am very happy that the second class fares have been brought down. I would have been more happy if the same yardstick was used for measuring the sleeper class passengers also because they are not on a different footing. I would have been happier if a policy decision was taken to give incentives to travellers who use railways more and more. For example, people travelling to a longer distances, may be from here to Jammu, may be from Chennai to Delhi or from here to Kerala - anywhere - the more you go, the fares must come down. I think, this is a principle which is being adopted by many countries who are using rails. But unfortunately, because of our resource crunch, we are not in a position yet to think of those who are travelling more to be accommodated and welcomed by taking lesser fares for a particular distance which they cover. I think, that must be a policy decision which has to be taken.

Secondly, I would think that the Railways must make an earnest attempt to bring more and more people into the Railway network for people to use railways for goods and for all purposes. I think, goods traffic is something which the Indian Railways should give great importance. I think, this is one way to make more profits. But it will be unfortunate to think that the goods fares should be increased for making more profit.

Sir, I am sorry that 12 per cent has been charged for goods and I think, that will be doing injustice to the principle that more and more people should be attracted to bring their goods through Railways. I am sure, when we have a resource crunch of this nature, especially in the petroleum sector, we must think of diverting our attention regarding traffic of goods more to the Railways and the Railways can be made more profitable.

I think it could not just be doubled, but it could be made ten times if an earnest effort is made. I do not think that more goods are not coming because our Railways is not competent for that. I think that we are not marketing it in this particular way and we are not trying our best to get more goods traffic in our passage of railway.

I do not want to speak more about the general aspects of the Budget. I do not also want to speak more about my State now that it has been well represented here by my predecessor speakers. I think as far as Kerala is concerned, the Minister also has now taken a view that there has been a little too much injustice that has been done to the State. I think, that is why the Minister has also taken care and pains to make some declaration in the House while the discussion is going on. I am very happy that the Minister has assured that amounts for doubling as well as for some other projects will be enhanced for Kerala. However, I have one suggestion with regard to the doubling. It is our most prestigious project, which all the Members from Kerala are projecting and the Government of Kerala also would like to project. I would submit that some earnest efforts must be made to see that the entire money that is given is utilised. I do not think that it is the land acquisition that matters. But, as far as Shoranur-Mangalapuram is concerned, the land acquisition is not a question which is going to pose a problem.

I think the Railways must give some important offices also to Kerala, so that the works for which funds have been given or for which you are going to give funds will be utilised within the scheduled time. We have been asking for one office of the Chief Engineer (Constructions). We have been told that it was once allowed also. Though it was granted to Ernakulam, it was not started just because the particular person who was asked to go to Ernakulam about four years back did not like to go to Ernakulam and he opted to take leave and that ended in an injustice to Kerala. I would say that office itself did not start at all. So, my humble submission is that the hon. Minister may please see. that - though this is not a Budgetary aspect - an office of the Chief Engineer (Constructions) is given to Ernakulam at the earliest, so that the whole construction work can be supervised in a better way.

As far as other projects are concerned, I would submit that the amount which is being promised also may not be enough as far as the total magnitude of the work is concerned. For example, whereas Rs. 240 crore

[Shri P.C. Thomas]

is necessary for the work of doubling from Shoranur to Mangalore, the amount which has been given and promised is a paltry portion of the total project amount. Therefore, I would urge upon the hon. Minister to see that more funds are given to Kerala in the years to come. I am sure that he will be presenting more and more Budgets in the coming years.

I would also submit that electrification is one process where our State has been completely left out. Though the total electrification that has been taken up in India is much more than what could be thought of in the Budgets which have come regarding Kerala, I think that something should be done in this respect immediately. My predecessor speaker Shri P.C. Chacko - now he is in the Chair [illegible] cannot address him by name - while speaking o[illegible]dget gave details and referred to the income [illegible]ived out of the investment that is being made [illegible]

He was tryi[illegible]w that the proportion was very high as far as the income that was derived from Kerala is concerned. The proportionate income is much less and it is going down lower and lower.

I would just try to point out one aspect which would show that the projects given to Kerala, compared to the total population are too meagre. It is a great injustice and we have to see that in further years to come this should be taken into account. I am not going into the full details but I may just place one aspect on record.

As per the 1991 census, as far as Kerala is concerned, the population comes to about 2.8 crores and the total rail line length is 1,053 kilometres. By way of this, if we make a calculation, every kilometre of railway line in Kerala is being shared by 27,633 people whereas as per the national average every kilometre is shared by 13,444.75 people. This is a great injustice but this is the truth. When you take other States into consideration, every State is far in excess as far as this particular calculation is concerned. So, I would like to submit that this is a very important aspect to be looked into in further Budgets to come.

With regard to the other projects, I am happy that one new line has been given to Kerala, that is, to Sabarimala. Of course, that is one line which, I think, is very important as far as Kerala is concerned. As far as the backward areas are concerned, as far as the agricultural areas are concerned and as far as new districts where there is no inch of railway line are concerned, this is a welcome step. I would submit that more budgetary support should be given to this line. Also, this has to be sent to the Planning Commission and their approval should be obtained immediately. Further work on this line has to be taken up immediately. I would also submit that other lines proposed in Kerala may be taken up expeditiously.

With these words, I conclude my speech for paucity of time.

[Translation]

SHRI SURENDRA YADAV (Khalilabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Rail Budget that has been presented by hon'ble Minister of Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and Satpal ji Maharaj in the interest of 93 per cent population of India. I am very happy that hon'ble Minister of Railways has not increased the ordinary class fare, platform ticket, season ticket and freight chargs of consumer goods. Besides this he was also set a good example by recognising the agony of daily wage workers and coolies. Alongwith it he provided employment to 1700 people belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and made 56,000 temporary employees permanent. By doing this he proved himself to be a true sympathiser of the poor. Our farmer leader Shri Nitish Kumar and Mr. George said that Indian Railways is heading towards degradation. Their unhappiness is but natural. So, I can very well understand their unhappiness. People from every walk of life have praised the Rail Budget. I can say that people who are not happy with Ram Vilas Paswan said :

"Kyon aaj usaka jikar mujhe khush na kar saka.
kyon aaj usaka nam mere dil dukha gaya."

SHRI CHHATARPAL SINGH (Bulandsahar) : Get it also written in some coaches.

SHRI SURENDRA YADAV : I would also like to give. some more examples. Whenever the members of the opposition hear the reputation of Paswanji or of United Front Government, it is natural that they would be distressed once there was a Pandit called Magha in the court of Raja Bhoj. Pandit Magha was distressed over the reputation of Raja Bhoj and he himself said in the court that :

"Yatha-yatha Bhojasya yasa vinardhart, mam hirdaya vidvarse"

Bhoj asked : "kim priya alakata dhavalatya shankya" Magh Pandit replied "Kahin meri patani ki kali latte saphed na ho jaye, isliye mujhe bahut kast hain." Mr. Chairman, Sir, here "Saphedo" stands for 'yash'. Similarly, these leaders are distressed over the increasing reputation of the United Front.

I wanted like to point out that whereas the hon'ble Minister of Railways has done a praise worthy work by including in the Budget the programmes for the neglected backward areas such as Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Eastern States and Karnataka he has made Uttar Pradesh, which is a vast state of 15 crore population and which is the heart of India. Unhappy by making a meagre provision of only Rs. 74. crores for it. Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh is the head quarters of North Eastern Railway under which also

comes a large part of Bihar. But due to the policy of decentralization, Gorakhpur's importance is decreasing Therefore, I urge upon him to make expansion of the railway workshop at Gorakhpur which is in a dilapidated condition so that the unemployed youth of Eastern Uttar Pradesh could get employment.

Recently in the year 1996 about 300 unemployed youth of Gorakhpur who were the trainees in Izzat Nagar and Gorakhpur Rail press, sat on dharna and resorted to hunger strie in front of the office of the General Manager of Gorakhpur zone. They were sent to jail. They were lathi charged. I would like to tell the Minister of Railways that we have fought their cause. I have put their problem before him I once again urge upon the Minister of Railways that they should be provided employment as they have now crossed the age limit of employment. Railways have provided training to them. Today they are having children, but are unemployed. I request him to take them in service.

The vacancies for clerks wre advertised by Gorakhpur and Muzzafarpur Railway Boards. The youth wanted to appear in the written last but it was cancelled. These boys are unemployed at present. The Chairman of Railway Boards start making fresh recruitment but they are not taking those young persons. I demand that they should be taken in service. They have much hope from the Railways.

The hon'ble Minister has given assurance to accord priority to rail security. I would like to say that cheats and goons are looting the passengers. But would also like to say that the Railway employees whether T.T. or the employees of R.P.F. or G.R.P. leave no stone unturned in looting the poor people. I would like to say that before becoming Member of Parliament I had gone to Mumbai. In Mumbai these constables would ask the people for giving them hundred or fifty rupees each openly in the coach and they would collect it forcibly. When I reached my destination, some people of my area complained to me in this regard. They were very distressed. They have made this complaint to me when a meeting of the Members of Parliament from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar was held in Rail Bhawan. I raised this matter there also. I urge upon him to pay heed to such injustice to poor, down-trodden people. They mete out this type of treatment the poor persons only who are found travelling on the roof of the train. The T.C. and T.T. check the tickets only of the persons poorly dressed and they do not check tickets from the well dressed person who travel without ticket. The hon. Minister has always been the sympathiser of the poor. So, I urge the hon. Minister to pay attention to it.

There is a mention in the Budget for conducting the survey of Khalilabad Naugarh line. The hon. Minister has said that provision for it has been made. I would like to say that provision has been made for doubling Gorakhpur commissionery are happy on account of it. But I would urge that Delhi Gaunda Khalida Express and Gorakhpur-Dehradun Express should be extended upto Khalilabad. This is an industrial town and a big market of handlooms. Therefore all trains should be halted there. Besides this, the Minister has promised to the people that the Vaishali Express would be halted. I urge him that he should fulfil that promise. One of trains from among Amarpali, Cochin, Jammu Tavi should be halted at Khalilabad. Provision should be made for halt of Bombay V.T. and Saheed Express at Magahar. This is the place of salvation of Sant Kasir. This train may please be halted there. I also urge that expansion of Magahar Khalilabad Railway stations should be made. This is a small station. No express train halts there. I request him one of the express trains should be halted there.

Sir, I would take one minute more. Gorakhpur is a big city. An overbridge should be constructed in place of the present road under the bridge at Dharamshala Market. During the rainy season the passage is filled with water. The over bridge will help free traffic movement. As I have said earlier, the doubling of rail line from Gorakhpur to Sahajanana should be extended upto Khalilabad. I demnd that if it must be extended upto Khalilabad. There is a Railway bridge at Pomingadha Gahasand, but there is no footpath there. Thousands of people die there. Therefore, I request that a footpath should be constructed there.

I want to make one more suggestion to the hon. Minister. The retiring Railway personnel have not yet received the amount of provident fund, gratuity etc. even after a lapse of 8-10 years and there are thousands of such people in Gorakhpur. I had met G.M. Gorakhpur in connection with a case of Shri Mangal Prasad, who retired as Commercial Superintendent, Deoria, in the Southern Railways. But he has not received even a single paisa so far. He retired in the year 1988 but he has not yet received the amount of Provident Fund, gratuity and overtime. I have cited these names for example, but there are thousands of such persons and the officers are deliberately delaying their case. People have got orders from High Court and Supreme Court for the said payment. But the officers overlook them. I request the hon. Minister to pay heed to this problem.

I wanted to say a lot, but there is the shortage of time. I am grateful to the hon'ble Minister that he has expressed his sympathy for the poor of the country and has made much provision for the poor. With these words, I support the Rail Budget which is development oriented...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South) : Sir, there are only three lady Members present here. You may kindly allow them to speak first...*(Interruptions)*

[Shri Surendra Yadav]

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is a good suggestion. Now, as the time is 9.30 p.m. I will first call all the lady Members to speak.

Shrimati Usha Meena may speak now.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI USHA MEENA (Sawai Madhopur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me opportunity for expressing my views. The Minister of Railways deserves thanks for the relief he provided for lower income group people in the Rail budget. I represent the Swai Madhopur constituency which is a tribal dominated area in Rajasthan. The announcement made in the Railway Budget for introduction of new railway trains and construction of new rail lines would benefit only Jodhpur, Barmer, Jaisalmer areas of western Rajasthan. In my constituency, Sawai Madhopur, he has included Dausa to Gangapur rail line. I am very thankful to him for that but Gangapur to Karoli rail line has not been included which covers a distance of only 30 kms. The survey work of Gangapur to Daulpur via Karoli has almost been completed but he have not included it in the Budget, whereas I myself met him several times for this. At that time he gave me assurance that it would be included in the Budget after receiving the survey report, but he has not done so and it has not been included the budget. There are a number of mines in my Constituency and there remains the constant danger of dacoits from the ravines of Chambal. Keeping it in view it is very important to link my area with Rail facility. If rail facility is provided, it would benefit the owner of mines, employees and labourers for transportation of goods and the help increase Railways revenue. It would also remove the fear of dacoits and fulfil the demand which has been raised for the last 40 years.

Sir, it pains me to point out that on the one side Paswanji is the sypathiser of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes people and on the other side not a single member of Parliament belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes was satisfied over the trains and main railway lines sanctioned in Rajasthan. Besides this, I have raised the issue of loco shed in Gangapur several times end have also made written requests to the Minister. Whenever I meet him I always raise the matter but due to shifting of loco shed to Kota, the railway property worth thousands of rupees has been lying idle and thousands of employees has been rendered jobless. So, I suggest that the property of railways should be properly utilised and arrangements should be made so that people could get employment. I have appraised the hon'ble Minister of this matter 2-3 times. Why does he say that they work for SC, ST people. We consider him to be sympathiser of SC and ST people. I came to him four times for this work. I have also met the Prime Minister in this regard. He always gives assuarance.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You tell one thing. When it was shifted to Kota, it was not done by us. It was shifted earlier. It would be done by finding some way out so that the people of Kota may not hurt.

SHRIMATI USHA MEENA : I am not saying that it should be brought back.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Had we done it in our time, we would now shifted it back.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam) : You should have lighted the lamp in the house which was in darkness for centuries.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Where there is light, it should not be put off. It was shifted to Kota earlier. You want to bring it back. What the members of Parliament of Kota will say about it. It is in our knowledge. We are looking into the case of rail line.

SHRIMATI USHA MEENA : You will have to do that because the credit of what was done from Ransa to Gangapur goes to the earlier Minister as it was his constituency. We have been making a demand for it for the last 40 years.

You might be aware that the stones used in Parliament House building are Karauli stones. Karauli is a religious place having temple of Kaila Devi who is worshipped as Vaishno Devi. People of the area are deprived of rail-line. This 30 mtre. Section can easily be connected with Dhaulpur. Probably, it has been surveyed and the survey report would have been presented.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Will you please state the areas which you are talking about?

SHRIMATI USHA MEENA : From Gangapur to Daulatpur via Karauli...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Please continue you speech.

SHRIMATI USHA MEENA : Please make it clear whether you are serious about connecting it or will continue promising only because the tribals do not believe it. Only responding in affirmation will not do because we have been demanding for the last ten months to connect it. None of the three-four works given in writing by me in this regard has been done to satisfy us.

Superfast train running between Jaipur to Mumbai via Sawaimadhopur should be stopped at Niwai in Tonk District since famous Vanasthali Vidhypeeth girls' school is located there. Girls have to come across a lot of difficulties due to non-stoppage of this train. Secondly, if the superfast is stopped at Digimalpura where Kalyanji fair is organised and which is attended by lakhs of people, it would be very useful.

I have one more small request ot make. Trains are running on broadgauge line in Gangapur and Hindon cities of my Parliamentary Constituency but there is no overbridge. People face lot of difficulties due to running of superfast train. Such flyover is very essential in mid of the city.

I request the hon. Minister of Railways and Sepcially Shri Satpal Maharaj and I would be highly obliged if he, keeping in mind his followers in Sawaimadhopur, gives a concrete shape to two-three works.

I once again thank you for presenting a good Rail-Budget. I would also like to thank Mr. Chairman for providing me an opportunity to speak.

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA (Junagarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose Rail-Budget. Indian Railways symbolises India's unity. Almost all the members of United Front have showed praised on the hon. Minister of Railways. I supose, the Rail-Budget presented in the House to be passed is likely to increase inflation, prices as well as regional imbalances. I do not know, why it has been praised. My suggestion is that Budget should be distributed after conducting a state-wise study. The step motherly treatment meted out in it is quite evident. Several states have become victim of partiality in regard to allocation of Rail-Budget. I would like to remind the hon. Minister of Railways of Something which dates back to 15.11.96. Asiatic Lion is found in Junagarh. It has not only its historical importance. But has a religious importance also. There is a plan of Rs. 100 crore for gauge conversion of Rajkot Verawal section for the development of Junagarh but only Rs. 13 crore have been provided. There is a proverb in Gujarati - 'Ek man ek Poodi'. When he (the Minister) visited Saurashtra, he had promised the people of the area that he would make provision for the area in the next budget i.e. this year's Budget but the people of the area are greatly disappointed.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : How

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA: Because, he had promised to include Surendranagar-Bhavnagar in Rail-Budget. Porbandar is the birth-place of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi but the Proposed train from Gandhidham-Bhuj and Porbandar to Delhi could not be introduced. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to request the hon. Minister to pay his attention to it. I would also like to remind him one more thing that Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, who gave the slogan of 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kishan', was instrumental in obtaining a special status for India and enhanced its prestige and resigned from his office on accurance of just one rail-accident. But today, almost everyday train decoities and train accidents occur. Not only this, the women passengers of trains are made victims of misconduct and atrocities even then these things hardly matter to the present incumbents. I hope that, he would remember Shastri ji and learn something from him.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : What does she want, should I too resign?

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA: He may think so.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : She stated about three rail-lines. Rajkot-Verawal section is of 1994 Budget and, as she said Rs. 5 crore have been spent thereon during the last years and Rs. 13 crore have been provided for this year. We are short of funds. Thus, we had two options - either we could have maintained status and or we could have avoided incurring any new expenditure. But we do not so. Since I am interested in the development of Railways, and make it speedier I want that some work should be done for this purpose and money should also be provided for this purpose but I told that it would be considered. The Government made as such funds available for this work as it could but she said that it disappointed the people of the area. But in my opinion, disappointment would have taken place in the condition if Rs. 50 crore were to be provided during the period of five years and only Rs. one crore would have been provided for one year. If Rs. 5 crore were provided for three years and now Rs. 13 crore are being provided for the current year, then what leads to disappointment? Work on Gandhi-Bhuj section is also to be undertaken and funds have also been provided for this purpose. Thirdly the plan regarding Surendranagar-Bhavnagar has been referred to cabinet and after its passage from the cabinet CCA will grant supplementary Budget for this purpose. I will see to it that it gets through there. After obtaining the Government's approval, the work will be started. She had gone abroad where I was looking for her.

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA: My foreign visit was scheduled earlier while first of the month was fixed for meeting which was later rescheduled for 15th of the month.

I would like the hon. Minister to reply other points also. I have always stressed that injustice have been done and is being done to Gujarat by the Union Government, be it regarding royalty on crude oil, gas-based power station or Sardar Sarovar Scheme. There has been persistent demand for setting up western Railway headquarters in Ahmedabad but that also has not been done. The conversion of Modasa-Kaperdvanj, Ahmedabad - Himmatnagar and Ahmedabad - Bijapur line and Samkhyadi - Palanpur metre gauge line, will reduce the distance between Kandla - Delhi by 400 K.M. It may also help in saving Rs. 200 per quintal in goods transportation. It has been stated that the Government of Gujarat, Salt Commissioner and Salt Industries Association are ready to bear all the expenses likely to be incurred on the conversion of Dhangda - Kunda line. Why is the Government not sanctioning this project? The salt industry can also be benefited if this project is sanctioned.

Due to train accidents, the faith of passengers on Railways is diminishing and the goods are being transported more by road than by rail. Keeping all these points in mind, Rs. 100 crore should be allocated for Junagarh - Viraval - Rajkot broad gauge line. More

[Shrimati Bhavnaban Devraj Bhai Chikhalia]

provisions have been made for the states like Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar Jammu and Kashmir and Karnataka but for Gujarat which is a leading industrial and commercial state, a provision of only Rs. 35.29 has been made. I would also like to know the criteria of allocation. I would like to request him to consider about the trains which I have mentioned. Keeping in mind all the points relating to Gujarat.

Two trains start in night from my parliamentary constituency Junagarh-one is Somnath mail and the other - Girnar Express. There is no train in the day time. I would like to request him to introduce a new train from Junagarh to Ahmedabad starting in day time. So far as the cleanlines is concerned, almost all the members have stated that there should be proper sanitation of toilets as well as coaches. The passengers have to face a lot of difficulties since the trains are not cleaned properly. Some more coaches of second A.C. should be added to Somnath Mail and more second class coaches to Girnar Express.

I shall conclude my speech by making one last point. A big relegious fair of Shivaratri is organised at Bhavnagar temple in Girnar. Around seven to eight lakh people gather there at that time. I had reminded the hon. Minister earlier also to introduce an extra train at that time. I, again requet the hon. Minister to introduce an extra train at that time for that place.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you a lot for providing me an opportuniy to speak.

[English]

KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO (Sundergarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to congratulate Ram Vilas Paswanji, the hon. Railway Minister for presenting his second Railway Budget. I also congratulate him for regularising 56000 casual labourers. I suport the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister.

He has tried to project the Budget as a pro-poor one and has described it as pragmatic, practical and development-oriented. His version to make Railways to function not only as a commercial institution but also as an efficient public welfare organisation for the development of the backward regions is commendable. His efforts to take Railways to the North-Eastern regions of Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Kashmir are remarkable and historical. Apart from this, he has declared many new lines to be laid, old ones to be developed and many new trains to be introduced.

Sir, while congratulating the hon. Railway Minister for his efforts to develop Railways in the backward and tribal regions, I am sorry to say that my State in general, and my constituency in particular, could not come under his purview of 'backward-tribal region'.

Now I want to mention some of the problems of my parliamentary constituency and my State, Orissa and regarding the development of Rourkela Steel Plant, I would like to say that the Howrah-Mumbai railway line is the only one running through my parliamentary constituency. The Steel City of Rourkela station is an important railway station of my constituency. I have been demanding on the floor of this House for providing terminal facilities at Rourkela station. Because of this, new trains could not be introduced from Rourkela to other parts of the country. I would request the Government for placing funds for providing terminal facilities at Rourkela.

Platform numbers four and five in Rourkela have been made operational since the last two years but there is no overhead shed. Passengers face a lot of difficulties during the rainy season and summer. Steps may kindly be taken for immediate construction of sheds over platform numbers four and five. The railway line which has been laid from Rourkela to Bimlagarh is used to bring iron ore to Rourkela Steel Plant. The remaining portion of Bimlagarh to Talcher rail line is to be laid down. This will have a direct and shortest route from Rourkela to Bhubhaneswar, the capital of Orissa. This will attract the industrial houses to Bonai Sub-Division of Sundargarh district, my constituency. This railway line was surveyed in 1977. This may kindly be resurveyed during 1997-98.

Sir, my district headquartes is not connected with railway line. Steps may kindly be taken to connect Jharsuguda-Sundargarh-Jaspurnya by a flyover bridge at Basanti Colony and Kukda Gate in Bandamunda-Bisra railway station. Steps may also be taken for the construction of a foot overbridge at Jaraikela, Bhalulata and Hemgiri railway stations. Many precious lives have been lost due to accidents at Jaraikela railway station. Government had assured me earlier that these three railway lines and foot overbridges would be constructed, but till now no steps have been taken.

I appeal to the Government to sanction funds for construction of foot over-bridges at Jaraikela, Bhalulatha and Hemgir Railway Stations without further delay.

Sir, now, I will come to introduction of new trains and extension of existing trains. Rourkela is the nerve centre of my Parliamentary Constituency. Due to Rourkela Steel Plant, people from all over the country are serving here but many parts of our country are not connected with Rourkela. I would request the Government to consider extension of Amritsar-Tata Nagar Express to Rourkela.

Sir, a part of Nizamuddin-Sambalpur Express, that is Hirakud Express, which used to go to Rourkela is being discontinued detached from Jharsugura. I would urge upon the Government to re-introduce this train and extend it upto Rourkela as was done previously. Introduction of Pantry coach in Bokaro-Alleppey train is

a commondable effort of our hon. Railway Minister. I would request him to attach one AC-II Class coach in this Bokaro-Alleppey Express.

Sir, Sambalpur-Talcher railway-line is to be completed without any further delay. Rupsa-Bangriposi railway-line should be converted into a broad-gauge line. The work should start as early as possible without any further delay.

Survey work of Khurda-Bolangir railway-line may be strted as early as possible.

Now, I conclude. Thank you, Sir, for giving me time to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : Mr. Chairman, Sir after waiting for a long time, you have permitted me to speak on rail budget, I am thankful to you for that. I oppose the rail budget, presented in the House. I am unable to understand as to why I should support this budget. There is no binding on me for this.

Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister towards my area and particularly those parts which are known as 'Angika'. For that area there is no provision in the rail Budget even for a single paise and therefore I oppose it. Our friends from Khagria are laughing, they also belong to 'Angika' This is eleventh Lok Sabha and since 1994, or even earlier demand for the construction of bridge on river Ganges between Monghyr and Khagria are being raised constantly. I have also raising this issue time and again. It is not so that it is my brain child but many hon'ble members from Congress sitting here perhaps know that it was announced during the regions of Pt. Nehru that bridge will be constructed on river Ganges. Minister of Railways is well aware because he has said so many times that my home district in Monghyr and Khagriya, but whether you want to ruin home dist[illegible] I want to say to the Minister that in 1994 I had to sit on fast upto death in support of this demand.

22.00 hrs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir whenever the Chief Minister of Bihar and Ram Vilas Paswan visit Khagriya and when the people of that are meet Paswan ji then he tells then that they are including it in this budget.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : No doubt my home district in Khagriya, but I have never said that it will be included in this or the budget. We had to select any one out of these two. It was more important to have bridge on Ganges in Patna. It is also important. It can be considered but when one is to be selected out of two than importance was given to the construction of bridge in Patna.

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : Alright, hon'ble Minister but whenever I go there the people there say that they have discussed this matter with Sh. Ram Vilas Paswan. He says that it will be coming in the next budget. I want to say that even after my 14 days fast upto death, Shri Pranav Mukherji, the then Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, had said that rail cum road bridge over Ganges between Monghyr and Khaghria will be constructed at any cost. After that I called off my fast. Present Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Prof. Madhu Dandawate has also written to Minister of Railways, Minister of Surface Transport and Bihar Government.

22.01 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at that time I was assured by Pranav Mukherji of construction of rail cum road bridge on Ganges and no action had been taken on that till now. I am sorry to say that even after the approval of the Planning Commission regarding construction of rail cum road bridge over Ganges in Manghyr, that has not been materialized in this budget. I want to say to hon'ble Minister that the infrastructure, whether it is of rail or road, has great significance from the traffic point of view. I want to say that your Government is there in Bihar and for attracting foreign investment Laloo ji has shown great pump and show and said many more things in this regard. Foreign investors came there and said that investment in Bihar is not possible till the infrastructure is provided there. Therefore infrastructure particularly in the field of transport, whether railway or road, will create employment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bihar is a poor state and its condition is constantly deteriorating after independence. No signification progress has been made in Bihar. Through you, I would like to inform the Hon'ble Minister that in U.P. length of Ganges in one thousand kilometres and there are 20 bridges on it. It meant one bridge out every 50 kilometre. Whereas in Bihar the total length of Ganges is 500 kilometre whereas there are only three bridges. On this basis also there should be atleast 10 bridges in Bihar whereas there are only three. As such seven bridges are still to be constructed over Ganges in Bihar. It hardly matters whether it is either Mokama or in Patna or Baksar. Sir, with the construction of one bridge atleast one lakh people will get employment. whether you want it in Bihar or not?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, every one is praising Shri Ram Vilas Paswan that he has presented a nice Budget. It is the only factor of my happiness. Not much more than this. I am greatly perferbed. Because we could not get any thing. Ram Vilas is in discussion these days and people are saying that it is a good budget. Apart from this Bihar could not get anything. You see after independence what was given to Bihar. You are praising here and talking but you see what has been given to Bihar. Sir you have ruled for many years.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Other states have been ignored and much more has been given to Bihar...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL : Through you I would like to say to the Hon'ble Minister that proposal rail cum road project has been approved by the Planning Commission. Promise in regard to demanding a report on that project has been made. It was promised in 1995-96 that Bihar Government would be asked to send if and get it done by railways. We had also receive a letter from railways stating that they agree to it. We want that in the budget speech you should indicate whether you want to do it or not. If you want to do this the time by which it will be done?

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA : We want to go to Khagria.

SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL : Second thing is that Shri Ram Vilas Paswan lived in Jamalpur for years. He will go to Khagria.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : It is very necessary to do It. No need of doing very good. You may proceed further.

SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL : I would like to say about Jamaipur Factory. Man power is constantly decreasing there. The number of workers have been reduced from 22 thousand to 10 thousand. I would like to thank some friends from congress. Shri Jaffer Sharief is not done it present. When he was Minister of Railways something was given to Jamaipur. Some load was increased. Every month 30 containers were manufactured there. Every month 50 box wagons were manufactured there. New load was given there. Both Monghyr and Khagaria are home district of Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, Every thing become clear after his arrival. It is said that full project of wagons is being prepared, estimates are being prepared. It is difficult to say whether every month 100 wagons will be manufactured or not in Jamalpur. I would like to tell the Minister that this is a very famous factory in the entire Asia, wherein good quality products are manufactured by workers. Jamalpur factory was selected for repairing by the Britishers 142 years back. What was reason behind that? The reason was that regarding man power the Britishers were of the view that most skilled labourers are in Monghyr and every item manufactured by them was of good quality. There was Gum factory during the British time that is why labourers of that areas were considered superior. That is why Jamaipur factory was set up there, But what happened after independence? 10 thousand workers have been rendered jobless in that area. The population of Monghyr sub-division is two crore. in this way the Jamaipur factory is on the verge of closure.

Through you, we would like to urge upon the hon'ble Minister as to whether he wants to level it as a coach factory, a wagon factory or a manufacturing workshop or not? Now repairing workshop is not going to solve any purpose. Patch work will not create employment opportunities in that factory. Therefore, I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister whether he can set up manufacturing workshop or not.

I won't take much time I would also like to say something about train dacoity. It is a very serious problem. It is not a question of any political party. When we are talking about the railway budget then all persons must think that there is great tenor in Bihar today. Whenever we board a train then stained frightened people say that it is happening in your rule. I say it is not my rule. You have elected us allright but here we are not in power. Ram Vilas is the ruler. Shri Laloo Prasad Yadav is the ruler-these two persons are sharing power. I am not in power...*(Interruptions)* These were in control then there was no cause of worry...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV (Saharsa) : It is in your control that is why it is not being checked.

SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL : I would like to say to hon'ble Minister that all parties must think about it. If State Government do not take the responsibility then the railways must have full right of deploying railway police and giving full power to them. Then only you can put on end to terroirsm otherwise railway will suffer a loss. People will stop travelling by train, people want to travel by bus, road more, they don't consider rail journey safe.

MR. SPEAKER : You have taken 12 minutes, your time was 6 minutes.

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : Through you, I would like to say to hon'ble Minister that no compensation is given to the next of kins of those persons who are killed while struggling for protecting the modesty of women. Their property is looted. Therefore compensation should be paid in such cases apart from giving employment to a member of that family. Third point...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : You are talking about third point, whereas your time is over. You have taken three minutes more.

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : I would like to conclude within two minutes. I want to place some small demands of my area. I am continuously writing but not a single work is being done. There is Jumai district in my constituency. There is no halt for Denapur, Harwrah Express, Delux there. There is much more sale of tickets here. We have said that a city counter be opened there in Jumai because bus owners there compell the people not to buy tickets. Therefore, city counter be opened there. It will be beneficial to railways but it has not been opened. I have said many a times, estimates has also been prepared. I would like to say to hon. Minister that Pawai, Mehsaleti halt is there in my area there D.M.U. train runs stops there. There is great population, estimates for Kharia, Ghoighat halt has been prepared but it has not been sanctioned.

A facility was available to the people of Darhara of stoppage of Vikramsheela. But that facility has also been withdrawn from these people. This facility should be restored for them.

At the end, I would like to say that rail line from Kajra to Kuel has not been doubled. Before Kajra and after Kuel whether you go to Harawah or whether you come from Mughalsarai and Delhi, there is double line. Only a distance of 17 k.m. from Kajra to Kuel is yet to be doubled. I request the hon. Minister as far as I knew that Eastern railway have also prepared estimates. You sanction it and start doubling work.

22.13 hrs.

[PROF. RITA VERMA *in the Chair*]

In the end I want to say that electrification is being done from Sitarampur to Mughalsarai. It was to be compieted by 1996 but it could not be completed till now, work is rapidly progressing and will be completed. There is a Jamalpur location workshop work pertaining to PHO of diesal engine is being done there. In the coming days you will have to do all the work whether manufacturing PHO. If you want to keep this working and if not, them there is no problem. Therefore, I would like to say to Hon. Minister that electrification must be done from Sahabganj to Kuel, it must be reflected in the budget.

The revival of that workshop will take place only after doing this work. With these words I oppose this budget because there is nothing in it for us;

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV : It will be done do it now.

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : When it is done I will strongly support it. With this I thank the hon. Chairman. Hon. Minister is being appreciated. I am thankful to him also.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You have raised this matter yesterday also and today also. Give the names of those persons who have died while fighting with criminals.

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : I will give the names of all four persons.

*SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM (Thanjavur) : Madam Chairperson, I welcome and support the railway budget for the ensuing financial year presented by Hon. Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. I am happy to participated in the discussion sharing my views on behalf of Dravida Munnetra Kazagam. Our Railway Minister, a member of this United Front Government has taken enough care and caution to do a balancing act to bring out a commendable budget. I would congratulate the Railway Minister for his gesture to protect the interests of common man. Second class passengers and daily commuters of the Railways like the season ticket holders have been spread. This only highlights your attitude to safeguard the interests of the working class and student community. I would like to place on record my accolades for his kind gesture.

1AC, 2AC, 3AC sleeper charges have been hiked by 10%. At the same time, you have also proposed a 5% increase in II Class Sleeper charges. As this facility in II Class coaches are used by common man mostly, I request the Railway Minister to reconsider the proposal to hike sleeper charges. It is needless to point out that ours is an agro-economy and most of our farmers are poor. So enough care must be taken to avoid price escalation of fertilizers like Urea of which prices may be affected by the levying of increased freight charges. Most of our farmers find it difficult to make both ends meet even if they are to work very hard.

In this balanced budget, Railway Minister has rendered justice to North-Eastern region which had been ignored for long. You have proposed laying of new railway lines in the backward regions of Bihar and Uttrakhand. Through this act of social justice you have changed the approach of the Railway to go in only for financially viable and lucrative projects. I thought the Minister would be present here when I take part in this discussion. I would like to recall the criticism levelled against our Railway Minister that he is inclined to favour his home State more. Cutting across the party lines, Members from all the sides of this House were heard making this charge during the discussion on Railway Budget last year. I would like to pose a question as to which Minister was ever spared from this criticism. If the Minister wants to escape from this criticism, he may have to invite criticism from the people of his home State. At the same time I cannot but look for your kind heartedness towards our region. The southern region specially Tamil Nadu and Kerala have always been left in the lunch like the uncared for babies. If you are not able to provide justice for Tamil Nadu and Kerala, you may atleast make one of the Members from those States a Railway Minister. If there is no other recourse you may have to resort to this to ensure progress and prosperity in those states.

In the recent times our Railways Minister is laying stress on punctuality, cleanliness and better catering services. We may find some improvement here and there but enough care is still called for. The Railway administration should get a face lift. Our small bearded young Turk like Minister may strive to achieve this.

I would like to bring to your notice the incidence of the deteriorating quality of service in the pantry cars of Tamil Nadu Express. Enough care must be taken to ensure hygiene. Trays and vessels like falsks should be clean. I wish the Railway administration should take note of it. Railway is a public carrier and it should not become a disease carrier. It would be better you take adequate precautions.

* Translation of Speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri S.S. Palanimanickam]

Several aspects of this budget are to be appreciated. But still I am constrained to highlight certain grievances pertaining to my region particularly my constituency. If the Members of Parliament fail to highlight local issues and problems, it would be difficult for them to face the electorate in their respective constituencies. It may not be easy for us to visit areas in our constituencies.

I must congratulate the Railway Minister for his assurance made through this budget that Rs. 10 crores would be allocated to complete the laying of broad gauge lines between Trichy and Thanjavur by the end of May this year. I gratefully acknowledge the kind gesture of the Minister to expedite this ongoing project. You must also ensure laying of broad gauge line between Thanjavur and Nagore. You may do well to allocate funds needed for this atleast when you come to this House with Supplementary Demands for Grants. If you can make more of allocation to complete this project, it would be linking three important religious shrines of three different religions. Three important shrines which are famous and known all over India are there. They bring together three religions namely Hinduism, Islam and Christianity.

Now they are changing. So far they were allowing Members to speak for 15 minutes and more. But now the Chairperson rings the bell.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There are also still 40 Members.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM : This railway line in my district will become a symbol of secularism by way of linking three world famous shrines belonging to three different religions. The crying need is to allocate more funds. I would like to point out that the capital town of my district and constituency, Thanjavur is an ancient and historical town. Most of the major towns and the cities, both in Tamil Nadu and in India have all been linked by Superfast Trains and Day Express Train like Shatabdi Express trains. In Tamil Nadu, cities and towns like Chennai, Tiruchi, Madurai, Coimbatore, Salem and Erode have all got the benefits of Superfast trains. But Thanjavur, and ancient town of India, has not been linked with any major city through Superfast trains. Even the railway lines on Thanjavur section have not been upgraded and strengthened for this purpose. I would like to bring it to the notice of the Hon. Railway Minister with a heavy heart. I would like to point out that the plying of Superfast trains via Thanjavur would bebefit passengers from Northern part of India especially the pilgrims going to Remeshwaram. I would like the Minister to give due consideration to this proposal.

Another important need I would like to emphasise would be the necessity to link Thanjavur town with Pattukkottai town in my constituency. It is a fast growing town. Laying of railway lines between these two towns were about to be taken up 30 years ago. Even land acquisitions have been completed. But I do not know the reason why it has been kept on the cold storage now. It is pending for the Minister that the people have started suspecting the integrity of their elected representatives like we the Members of Parliament and that of the Government. It is alleged that people who matter have taken money from the bus operators who do a roaring business plying buses between Thanjavur and Pattukkottai. I urge upon the Railway Minister to save us from this baseless wild criticism levelled against the elected representatives of the people of that area. This criticism can be obviated only when you complete laying the rail line between Thanjavur and Pattukkottai.

I also want the Railway Minister to consider introducing direct train to and from Chennai to provide Thanjavur a destination status with a route that would link Mayavaram and Needamangalam. Needamangalam -Mannargudi Railway line was abandoned based on the studies conducted about their economic viability. Now I understand that State Highways department would like to take over that abandoned route. Now that the Railway lines have been removed, that Railway land could be handed over to the State Highways department so that it could facilitate providing alternative communication route.

While laying new Railway lines in rural areas, care must be taken to construct level-crossings. Villagers may have to cross Railway lines either to go to their fields or to go to cremation grounds at the other side of the Railway line. The views of the local community should be collected and their sentiments should be respected while laying new Railway lines along the villages.

It is a comppaint that Railways are not getting adequate budgetary support from the Union Government. I would like to point out that the support that was to the tune of 75% has now come down to 60%. We the Members of this House should come forward to take up the cause of the Railways with the Union Government.

Railways must provide safe and comfortable journey. Sense of security should be there especially during long journeys. Railways link the different parts of the country ensuring national unity. It also strengthens national integrity. Railways serve the public in as many ways as possible. It takes upon itself several social obligations carrying social burden alongwith that. Hence Railways must get more of budgetary support from the Union Government.

While concluding my speech, I would like to request the Railway Minister again to give due consideration to the demands, I have made here Reiterating my support to this Railway Budget, I thank the Chair for providing me with the opportunity to speak in this august House on this occasion.

[Translation]

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : Sir, we shall enquire into the matter of Hygienic plates raised by hon'ble member.

DR. ARVIND SHARMA (Sonipat) : Hon'ble chairman, Sir, at the outset, I would like to speak in support of the

railway budget presented by hon'ble Railway Minister Secondly, I want to say that hon'ble Railway Minister has expressed his line of thinking through the Rail Budget. He has demonstrated that he is the well wisher of the poor people.

Sir, Service to poor people is not thing of ostentation. It can be done only by that person or Government, who have the heart to do so and who are destined to do so. First, I want to say something about the daily passengers. It has been depicted in the railway budget that 7,500 trains run daily and one crore ten lakh passengers travel in these trains. Around to percent among them are daily commuter. I want to sy something about them Through you, I want to ask the Minister as to what facilities have been provided to these daily passengers in the railway budget. No facility as such has been provided to them in regard to electrification for operation of new passengers train or for laying of new railway line.

Sir, Secondly, I want to speak about National Capital Region. 75 percent people of Haryana come under National Capital Region. But no provision has been made in this budget for National Capital Region,. 75 percent area of Haryana, Compeising of Faridabad-Palwal, Gurgaon-Rawari, Bahadurgarh-Rohtak, Sonipat-Panipat comes under National Capital Region. Only 11 crore have been provided in the budget for Haryana and it is also not known as to where this amount would be spent. As far as running of new daily train is concerned, no provision has been made in this railway budget for Electrification or laying of new railway line.

Sir, through you, I want to tell the Railway Minister that some attention has to be paid towards the daily passengers because hon'ble Minister thinks a lot about the poor I want to tell that Government Employees Industrial workers, students and small traders travel in these trains. I come from Sonipat for which no train has been provided during the last 12 years for the daily commuters.

Madam, Chairperson, through you, I urge the hon'ble Minister to introduce a train from Panipat to Sonipat-Delhi between 7-30 AM and 8-00 AM because around 40 to 50 thousand passengers travel from Sonipat to Dehli. The person working in Central Government office or in Delhi who has to at end the office at 10 AM, will start at 5-00 AM and will reach Delhi at 8.00 AM whereas his office will open at 10.00 AM. He starts at 5.00 AM from the house and returns back at 9.00 PM. In this way he is spending 14 hours in duty though generally on employee do not have duty for more than 8 hours. There are four trains in the morning but in the afternoon there is no train up 10'clock. Madam Chairperson, through you, I request the Minister to pay attention wowards this and to start one more train at 9.00 AM or 10.00 AM for the daily passengers. Around 40-50 thousand daily passengers come from Gannaur and Sonipat. But no one has thought anything about them.

Madam Chairperson I would like to say one thing about R.P.F. also. It is said that they are for the security/ sefety or railway goods. Goods worth Rs. 4 crore were stolen during the last year 1995-96, out of which goods worth Rs. 70 lakhs were recovered. Through you, I would like to tell the Minister to make R.P.F. more strict when R.P.F. will more vigilant, then only the things will improve.

Madam Chairperson, railways have progressed very well in the field of sports and games. Last year railways have won 16 competitions and during the current year till January 1997 it has won 13 competitions. Two railway sport persons have received Arjuna Award. There was sports quota in R.P.F. earlier which has been discontinued now. I request that sports quota should be restored in R.P.F. There are Hockey, Kabaddi, Wolley Ball, Foot Ball, Wrestting, athelitics and swimming teams under the railway sports. There was sport quota in R.P.F. Earlier byt I don't know why it has been discontinued. During 1972 there used to be Mr. A.S.C. Mukhbain Singh in R.P.F. He had won Bronze medal in Olympic Hockey. Therefore, I request that sports quota should be kept in R.P.F. and provision should be made for out of turn promotion for outstanding sportsman in R.P.F. or railways so that sports and sportsmanship may be encouiaged.

Madam Chairperson, Kindly pay attentions towards my regading sonipat A passenger train may be start-between 7.00 AM and 8.30 AM from there. Even though, I have been repeatedly demanding this train has been started. Even the D.R.M. Delhi has also given in writing that there is a heavy load and there is a need for one more passenger train there but senior officials say that the track is not free. This is not an answer. On the one hand load from the National Capital Region on Delhi is increasing so much and on the other hand no new train is being pressed into service for the daily commuters. I, therefore, demand that one track should be specifically kept free for daily passenger trains found for Delhi from the National Capital Region for the convenience of daily passenger.

Madam Chairperson, through you, I would like to give a suggestion to the Railway Minister that a provision a special budget should be made under Railway budget separately for the Convenience of daily railway passengers of National Capital Region and for development of railways in the National Capital Region. One track may be kept free for trains coming from National Capital Region bound for Delhi. If the tracks are kept free upto 9.00 AM—9.30 AM, It would be very convenient.

Madam Chairperson, if stoppages of some mail and Expess trains namely 8477 up, 8478dn and 4667, 4668 are provided at Sonipat it would be of much help. If Happa and Malwa Express are provided wite stoppage at Sonipat, it would be better because if stoopages are provided at Sonipat for the people found proceeding for Maata Vaishno Devi they will not have to go to Delhi to board these trains. Lakhs of people from Sonipat and adjoining areas visit, Maata Vaishnow Devi for Darshan'.

[Dr. Arvind Sharma]

If the setrains are given stoppages at Sonipat. It would be good. If daily Express train is provided with a stoppage at Julana, it would be good because the train runs from Ganganagar to New Delhi via Julana. A new railway station may be constructed at Thaska (Mahra) which comes under Gohana Tehsil, for the convenience of the passengers of several village ...*(Interruptions)*

Madam Chairperson, I am concluding. Through you I would like to appraise the Minister of the problems relating to my area only. If stoppages of some main important trains namely 4517 UP Uncha Express 4589 UP 4589-UP Bhatinda Express and 4659-Up Amritsar Express are priovided at Sonipat and Panipat then it would be more convienient for the railway passengers of the area. Besides I would request to raise the level of platform, where the platform are at low level and also to construct railway bridges so as to avoid accidents.

Madam Chairperson, One train from Delhi to Bahadurgarh via Rohatk may be introduced. I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards a peculiar thing about Bahadurgarh that water has been logging around platform Number 3 of Bahadurgarh Railway Station for several years which has taken a shape of a pond. This Stagnant and dirty water has become a menace for the travellers and for the people residing in and around this railway station and many types of diseases are spreading as a result thereof. I request the Minister to issue directives to the railway officials to remove the said dirty water from there immediately.

Madam Chairperson, Now I would like to draw the attention of the Minister towards my area one more survey may be conducted to connect Jhajjar to Sonipat via Sampla under a survey which was conducted for laying Rewari-Rohatak new railway line, Sir, this is a long pending demand of the people of the area. Electrification work of Shakurbasti-Bahadurgarh railway line is also lying closed for a long time. Therefore, I strongly urge to undertake electrification of Bahadurgarh-Dehli line and to introduce a new train on this track for the convenience of the passengers.

Just now, hon'ble Kalpanthji and several other colleagues have said that illegal enroachment has been made on the lands of the railways at several places. I want to draw the attention of the Minister towards Bhagwan Shri Vishwakarma ji temple which was earlier located near railway station...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please don't go in detail. tell it later to the Minister.

DR. ARVIND SHARMA : Vishwakarma Samaj had given this land to the British Government in 1928 to construct railway station. The Government had promised that Vishwakarma temple and the land which is under it, would belongs to the temple itself but now the railways has constructed a scooter and cycle stand there and encroached the land...

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please sit down. I am calling other speaker...*(Interruptions)*

DR. ARVIND SHARMA : I urge upont the Minister to free the said land from the encroachment of railway immediately...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are not listening to me. I am calling the next speaker.

DR. ARVIND SHARMA : Madam chairperson, I am concluding. I would like to draw your attention towards the request of the employees of Parliament House and Central Government. 1. DKM passenger train which starts at 7.45 AM from Old Delhi for Ambala, may be run *via* New Delhi. Similarly 3 DPM triain, which Stats at 7.30 PM from Old Delhi may also be run via New Delhi to Panipat so that Government and Non-Government employees and other daily passengers can come from and go to Sadar Bazar and New Delhi easily.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your time is over. Now, you please sit down.

DR. ARVIND SHARMA : Madam Chairperson, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I request all the speakers with folded hands to conclude their respective speeches in five minutes.

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR SINHA (Gazipur) : We cannot complete our speech in five minutes...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : When five minutes time is allotted, you people will drag your speech to ten minutes.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please listen to me. I am on my legs. You please sit down. You people will drag the speech to ten minutes when 5 minutes time is allotted. if 10 munutes time is allowed you will drag it to 30 minutes. All members will get five minutes each.

[English]

SHRI V. DHANAJAYA KUMAR (Mangalore) : Madam Chairperson, the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan has presented his second Railway Budget. I do not find anything here to support this Budget and welcome the proposals.

Madam, you have been using the bell very often. I am making a concrete suggestion. I do not find any use in sitting so late and rendering our speeches here in the House. It is for the Minister of Railways to consider. This ritual could very well be avoided if the Minister of Railways before presenting the Railway Budget, could call a meeting of all the Members of Parliament on a zonal basis and collect suggestions to know their demands. He could, once for all, tell them that he would consider those demands or that he could not consider the other demands.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is a very good suggestion.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : It makes no sense. We are sitting here for several hours...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You do something so that this ritual is stopped.

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : The M.Ps attend the meeting of Parliamentary Consultative committee. They may exprees their views there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Before preparing Railway budget, you may call a meeting of separate zones. The time pressure will be reduced by this.

[English]

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Madam, I have been closely hearing and observing those who have been making their submissions here. Everybody is pleading for a line or for the introduction of a new train or for doubling or for track renewals, etc. All these could have been very well considered in such a meeting if the Minister of Railways wanted to give a good picture of the Indian Railways.

As I have said, I do not find anything worthwhile to render support for this Budget, for the simple reason that it is totally directionless. It is lacking in vision, and the occasion is used to appease a section of the people.

Some of the friends have been praising the Minister of Railways. At least, I do not believe in flattery. I do not want to flatter the Minister of Railways. My friends may very well read the Railway Budget. The Plan outlay for the year is Rs. 8,300 crore, out of which Rs. 3,030 crore is coming by way of borrowings and also because of the BOLT and Own Your Wagon Schemes. But for the new dosage of taxation to the tune of Rs. 1,800 crore, I do not think the Minister of Railways would have been able to, leave alone new proposals or new works, run the railways; he would not have been able to mantain the railways properly. This is the fate of the Indian Railways. That is why, with a heavy heart, I said that this Budget is totally directionless and it is lacking in vision.

Friends have been telling that so much has been given to Karnataka. I would like to remind you, if that is the case whenever the Railway portfolio is held by a Minister coming from a particular State, that Karnataka should have been a Heaven today, so far as Railway is concerned. I would like to remind you that right from the day of late Shri Hanumanthaiah, Shri Suresh Kalmadi belongs to Karnataka, one after the other, Karnataka had contributed so many Railway Ministers to this nation. But we do not find any railway line worth mentioning in the State of Karnataka.

People say that so many new trains commencing from Delhi or from other parts of Northern India go to Karnataka. I must tell you that in the State of Karnataka, those trains would travel a distance of not more than 150 kms or 200 kms. The entire train, starting from Jammu or Delhi or Amritsar, will travel more than 90 per cent or even 95 per cent of the total distance in other States. Then, where is the importance of Karnataka? You can simply say that all the trains are going to. Karnataka.

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : That is how, we connect the stations.

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : I am only trying to mention that Karnataka is not given a better deal in the Railway Budget. Karnataka is getting its due share after a long long time and after having contributed so many Railway Minister to this country.

SHRI A. SAMPATH (Chirayinkil) : Are you opposing this Budget because of that?

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : What has been mentioned in the Budget is nothing but three or four new surveys. It may be verified. I understand that about 900 such survey reports are lying in the cupboards of the Railway Board. Nine hundred survey reports, which have been collected earlier, are lying in the cupboards of the Railway Board. When they are going to be implemented, I do not know, This is only to include some more new survey reports and then keep it in the cupboards. It will be of no use.

So, the proposals alone will not improve the situation in Karnataka. That is why, I would suggest that the Minister of Railways must take into confidence the feelings of all the Members representing the various regions in the country. He should collect the information, know their demands and then have a proper vision. He must visualise how much money could be pooled and how much we will be able to invest in a particular year and properly prepare a plan so that everybody can be happy.

We must know about it. After all, the Railways, as has been rightly said by the hon. Minister, are not being run only on a commercial basis. They have a definite role to play in the integration of the nation and also to do service to the citizens of this country.

Madam, I will be completing within the given time. So far as Karnataka is concerned, out of the 20 districts in Karnataka State, a part of my constituency comes in one district called Kodegu which is totally denied of a railway line. If the people of Kodagu want to see a railway line or a train running, they must go to either Bangalore or Mysore or Mangalore. So, this Kodagu district is denied of a railway line. Except Kodagu, in all other districts, at least for a short distance, the train is running. My friends from Karnataka would definitely agree with me in this regard.

SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH (Chitradurga) : The people of Kodagu can go to Tellicherry, which is nearest to Kodagu, to see the train...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Would you like me to go across the border? Do you want to drive me out of Karnataka? And, to see a train, I must go to Kerala! This is the situation.

This time, fortunately, new surveys have been suggested to connect parts of Kodagu with the capital city of Hassan district from where our dear Prime

[Shri V. Dhananjaya Kumar]

Minister is coming. From Channarayapatna to Kushal Nagar and also from Madikere to Channarayapatna, new surveys have been included. I would only urge upon the Minister of Railways that these surveys should be conducted as early as possible. Whatever survey report you get, the laying of new lines should be executed at the earliest possible time so that the people of Kodagu also can be proud of having a railway line in their district.

My last demand is that there is one important line between Mangalore and Bangalore *via* Hassan and Arsikere. This was constructed some 15-20 years back. A portion of this line between Bangalore and Arsikere, and Arsikere and Hassan has already been converted into broad gauge. As a result, the operation of the train between Hassan and Mangalore is suspended for gauge conversion work. The total funds required for the gauge conversion between Mangalore and Hassan is Rs. 185 crore. Till last year, the total money spent for the gauge conversion is Rs. 35 crore. This year, some provision has been made, rather Rs. 30 crore has been provided for the gauge conversion work. But I would submit that a lot of daily commuters are travelling a distance of about 90 KM. between Mangalore and a place called Subramanya Road inside Dakshina Kannada district because the operation of the train is suspended. They are finding it very difficult to go to the place of work and come back home daily.

I had made a suggestion to the hon. Minister of Railways saying that if not the entire Mangalore-Hassan line, at least one section, to a distance of about 90 KM. between Mangalore and Subramanya Road could be completed. I mean, the gauge conversion work could be completed on a priority basis. If a target is set, I understand, at a cost of not more than Rs. 59 crore, this work could be completed. So, I would request the hon. Minister of State to kindly consider this and make a provision for this.

Somewhere, I find in the Budget Speech that the hon. Prime Minister has promised that if need be, he would come forward with more budgetary support in the sense that he would give some more funds from the exchequer. The hon. Minister may please stretch his hands and lay his hands on all such funds and give top priority to this line so that this section of the railway line may be converted into broad gauge. This is helping the commuters to travel between Mangalore and Subramanya Road.

With these words, as I had said in the beginning itself, my suggestions may kindly be considered at least for the next year. They may kindly be considered so that the value of the Railway Budget gets enhanced and people start participating in the discussion with more enthusiasm. This way, they will be happy to know in advance that their demands at least, to some extent, would be fulfilled by the Railway Minister. For these reasons, I would be at a loss to support this Budget.

SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH : Have you reconciled to the fact that this Government will continue in power next year also?

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : That is up to you. As somebody was saying from that side that 'United we fall and divided we remain', that is how, he has coined a new phraseology! That may be unity in diversity. God alone can save this Government. Government is a continuing entity. So next year, these suggestions may kindly be considered.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Ramesh Chennithala to speak.

[Translation]

I hope, you will conclude within allotted time.

(Interruptions)

[English]

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS (Jalpaiguri) : Madam, I would like to know why the CPI (M) has not been getting any chance right from 6.30 onwards.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Would you please listen to me or if you want to speak that way then go ahead.

[English]

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : It is our calculation that we are not getting any turn...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do you want to listen to the reply or you intend to speak. Atleast when I am here, as a rule I allow one Member each from the BJP, the Congress, the United Front and the CPI (M). I do not know what happened in between I follow that rule. You must not cast aspersion on the Chair.

[English]

SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH : I do not think that he is casting an aspersion...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your calculation may be wrong. It is the rule of the House...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur) : You have got the record of time as well. You can verify from the record as to how it happened.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please come and check the record. You must not and can not cast any aspersion on the chair in the House. You must know it.

[English]

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : This is based on the strength of each party as to how many members they have in this House...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please stop arguing. It is the direction of the Chair as to who is to speak. You please go ahead.

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam) : Madam Chairperson, the Indian Railways is a symbol of unity in diversity of our country. Indian Railways is one of the biggest railways in the world. This is definitely a public utility service and all the Members from diferent parties and different sections of this House have been demanding new railway lines, new gauge conversions, more passenger amenities and other facilities. But unfortunately, every year, the budgetary suport from the Finance Ministry has been coming down.

Every Member has been asking for more facilities to be provided in his constituency and in his State. What we can see is that earlier the budgetary support to Indian Railways was only up to 75 per cent. Now it has drastically come down to 16 per cent. We have been discussing this point for the last so many years. But the Ministry of Finance has not been giving more budgetary support to the Indian Railways. The Indian Railways are taking market borrowings up to Rs. 250 crore. They are definitely increasing their internal resources. Now, Rs. 2,800 crore are needed for the rolling stocks. The total loss is estimated to be of the order of Rs. 1,950 crore. The number of locomotives produced in our country is 160 to 170.

We need more wagons but the production is coming down. The main reason for this is the lack of budgetary support to the Railways. So, my first and foremost point is that the Ministry of Finance should increase the allocation to the Indian Railways so that the Indian Railways can facilitate the demands of the Members and have some development. Definitely, the development of our Railways is very much necessary for the development of our counrty.

As rightly pointed out by other Members, our Railway Minister was considering to increase the revenue by way of taxes and other methods to the tune of Rs. 1,800 crore. But that amount is not adequate and with this the genuine demands put forward by the Members cannot be met. So, the Government of India should ponder over this and increase the budgetary allocation for the Railways that we can take up more developmental activities in different parts of our country.

There are certain important lines to be constructed. But in this regard, our State of Kerala has been very much affected. In every Railway Budget, we are being neglected. Even the amount earmarked in earlier Budgets for our State was not spent properly. So, I request the hon. Minister to examine this aspect and do the needful.

Madam, when we discussed this issue with the Railway Minister, he said that 'We have allocated Rs. 60 crore or Rs. 70 crore for each doubling and other things'. But that amount is not spent properly and the officials concerned also are not taking it seriously and so, Kerala is being neglected totally.

Considering area-wise or population-wise, the railway kilometerage in Kerala is low compared to the rest of India. After sanctioning and constructing the Ernakulam-Alleppey-Kayamkulam line, no new line has been constructed in the State of Kerala and there is no active proposal for a new developmental line there. In the year 1993, I pur forward a new proposal for a new railway line which is connected to Sabarimala. Sabarimala is a pilgrim centre; it is a centre of national integration and crores of pilgrims are coming to Sabarimala. So, there was a proposal from my State that there must be a line from Kottayam to Punalur connecting Sabarimala; and it was considered by the then Railway Minister. The preliminary engineering and traffic survey was also ordered by the then Railway Minister Shri C.K. Jaffar Sharief. That survey has already been over. So, if this new line is provided, it will definitely be helpful for the total develpment of the area.

I can very well say that Kottayam is an immediate railway junction to Sabarimala. As of today, special trains are running from Vijayawada to Kottayam. They are also running from Hyderabad to Kottayam during the pilgrims season. So, provision of this new line will definitely facilitate the total development of central Travancore areas.

Madam, for this line, the survey is already over. I was also told that it was sent to the Planning Commission but I am very sorry to point out that in this year's Railway Budget there was no mention of it at all. So, my request is that considering all the aspects, the priorities should be given for this line. When this Punalur-Tenkasi line will be converted to broadgauge, it can be connected very well to important places of Tamil Nadu also.

The Kottayam-Sabarimala portion of the proposed line measuring about 59 kilometres could be the first phase of this construction. This portion of the line will pass through Manarcadu, Ponkunnam, Kanjirappally, Erumeli etc. When completed, the line will provide a railway link serving important pilgrim centres such as Guruvayoor, Sabarimala, Nilakkal, a church established by St. Thomas, a disciple of Christ and visited by Christian pilgrims, Madurai etc. It will also link the southern parts—Cochin, Tuticorin etc.

Actually, this was a very feasible line. I was surprised by the speech of the Railway Minister when it was not included there.

In this regard, I wanted to mention about a letter which was given by Shri C.K. Jaffar Sharief on a matter raised under Rule 377 regarding the construction of a new railway line from Kottayam to Punalur. He said that there was a proposal for it—I do not want to repeat the whole text of the latter. This was addressed by the then Railway Minister to me.

23.00 hrs.

The Railway Minister has changed. But the Railways is an institution. It is a part of the Government. There is

[Shri Ramesh Chennithala]

a very responsible Board. When the Minister of Railways writes something to a member of Parliament, it should be honoured. But, unfortunately, it was not honoured by them. I can place it before the hon. Minister for Railways. In reply to a matter raised by me under Rule 377, the then Railway Minister, Shri Jaffar Sharief said that the survey report would be coming and he would consider it and implement it on a priority basis. But, unfortunately this railway line has not at all seen the light of the day. It is very unfortunate.

My request to the Minister is, already he has sanctioned Anganmalli-Shabarimala line. It is a welcome step. I am not objecting to it. But a link from Kottayam to Erumeli which proceeds to Punalur will definitely help the total development of the Central Travancore area. In this way the long-standing demand of the people can be met. That is the first point I wanted to make.

Secondly, here is a letter from the Railway Minister. It is regarding the railway development of Kerala; doubling of Shoranur-Mangalore and Quilon-Thiruvananthapuram lines. This letter itself shows that the Railways will give priority to these two lines. When the Konkan railway line is opened, the people of Kerala will get the benefit only if he doubles the Shoranur-Mangalore and Quilon-Thiruvananthapuram lines.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude in two minutes.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : It is not possible, Madam. I will take three to four minutes more.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please try to conclude.

SHRI RAMESH CHENITHALA : The amount which is earmarked for Shoranur-Manalore line and Quilon-Thiruvananthapuram line is not spent during the current year as well as last year. I want to know what is the reason behind not spending the amount earmarked for the doubling of these two important railway lines.

Take for example the electrification of Erode-Cochin line. The amount was sanctioned for its electrification. Now the electrification is up to Palakkad only. Why is the Railways not taking care to extend it up to Ernakulam?

Thirdly, I come to the gauge conversion of Quilon-Sunkotai line. Actually it was mentioned in the Railway Budget also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Madam, give me two-three minutes. I have just started.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already spoken for eleven minutes.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : I have not taken even two minutes. Please help me and give me protection. I have not even taken two minutes. Do not disturb me like this. I will stop if you want. I have been watching the clock. I have not taken more than two minutes. How can I finish it like this?

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will allow you if you promise to finish it in two minutes.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : The hon. Minister is always saying that the amount is earmarked. But what is the reason for not spending the amount in Kerala for such a long time in every Budget? I want to tell him one more thing. The doubling of the Ernakulam-Kayamkulam line *via* Kottayam is in the Budget speech itself. But he is saying that this cannot be extended up to Thiruvananthapuram because the line is saturated. The answer for this is the doubling of Ernakulam-Kayamkulam line *via* Kottayam. Otherwise he cannot extend any train.

A new train from New Delhi to Thiruvananthapuram is a long-standing demand of all of us. In reply to the debate on the Railway Budget also last time Shri Paswan agreed and promised that there would be a new train from New Delhi to Thiruvananthapuram. But this promise has not kept. The Cochin-Bilaspur Express should be extended to Thiruvananthapuram. There was a demand for a new train from Kota to Thiruvananthapuram because people who are in Rajasthan and other places have to travel overnight to Bina and catch their train to Kerala.

We are saying that he has neglected Kerala because he announced eight railway zones, but not a single one goes to Kerala. A Chief Engineer's office at Ernakulam was promised. The circular was issued and the order was also issued, but it has not been implemented till now. I can very well say that Southern Railway means only Tamil Nadu. Southern Railway means only the developmental activities of Tamil Nadu. No officers are coming to Kerala. They will not have any inspection in Kerala sector. They do not undertake any work in Kerala. All the old bogies and dilapidated bogies are sent to Kerala. I am surprised that the trains which were there during the time of Mahatma Gandhi and the Third Class compartments used by Mahatma Gandhi are sent to Kerala for our use! Passenger amenities in Kerala also should be improved.

As Shri Jaffar Sharief opened the pilgrim hall at Nagore, I demand that a pilgrim hall at Kottayam also for the Sabarimala Passengers should be opened.

I want to conclude by making one more point. After the presentation of this Budget. MPs from Kerala staged a *dharna* before Parliament. Last time also, there was a meeting with MPs from Kerala belonging to all the political parties.

The hon. Minister had promised that Rs. 100 crore would be given to us. He may please examine this. They have not spent any money. The money earmarked was not spent. What is the reason for this? Today, again, they are saying that they would give us the money. Simply earmarking money and giving assurances in Parliament will not work. The people of Kerala are agitated. There has been a *bandh* in the Malabar area of Kerala. The people are agitated and totally disgusted. With a heavy heart, I would warn the Government that

such a neglect cannot continue. The Government will have to face very serious repercussions, we will have more agitations and we will not allow the Railways to neglect the State of Kerala.

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

I rise to support the Railway Budget and the hon. Minister of Railways in his effort to have something for the benefit of our country. At the same time, I am very sorry to note that the hon. Minister of Railways has completely forgotten the problems of north Bengal, which is also not less backward in comparison with the other backward areas of the country.

It is the comment of the people of that area that this Budget is very bad for our State, West Bengal, in general and for north Bengal, in particular. There is a long-standing demand that the Rajdhani Express from Guwahati to Delhi should be run daily but it has not been accepted. It is the demand of the people of North Bengal and also of the Chief Minister of West Bengal that there should be a fast train, a Shatabdi-like train, starting from NJP to Sealdah or Howrah. That has not been included in the present Budget.

There is another problem relating to promotion of tourism. Our demand is to improve the Himalayan Railways. But that has also not been included in this Budget and to takeup construction of BG line from siliguri to Darjeeling via Sukna to reduce more than 25 km.

There are two schemes that have been accepted. One is the scheme for gauge conversion and the other is the ordering of a survey for a new line. I would request the Government and the hon. Minister of Railways to expedite these two schemes so that the work may be started at an early date.

Now, I am placing another demand. The All India Railway Exployees' Confederation, All India Loco Runing Staff, the CMW Labour Union and the Diploma Engineers' Association of Railwaymen are all trying to have their unions registered. They are not getting it. I would request the Government to look into it.

Another problem I would like to highlight is about shifting of all the vendor stalls at the Howrah station. The vendors are facing too many difficulties and the Railways are losing too much account of this. I would like to ask the Government to take this problem into account.

I would request the hon. Minister to take up conversion of Barsoi-Radhikapur (MH), Santipur-Nabadwephat, Katwa-Barddhaman and Ahmedpur-Katwa (NG) lines into broadgauge lines. Another important request that I would like to make is that the Saraighat Express should be run daily and AC2 and AC3 coaches should be attached to it. This Express should have a stoppage at Coochbehar as it is the district town. The people for long have been demanding the introduction of an express train from Asansol to New Jalpaiguri and to extend the Gour Express to New Jalpaiguri.

I would request the hon. Minister to introduce express trains from Guwahati to all parts of the country. It has been taken into account by the Government. I am requesting him again to look into it. An express train from Coochbehar to Calcutta should be introduced as Coochbehar is very backward in the field of rail communication. Then, I request the hon. Minister to run Teesta-Torsha train by bifurcating it-one from Haldibari to Sealdah and another from Coochbehar to Sealdah. The Minister should look into the demand for expanding the railway network in the district of Coochbehar. Previously, I had stated that a survey has been ordered. That should be expedited so that the construction of Railway line is carried out soon. I have already stated the importance of modernising the Himalayan Railways.

An express train should be run between Calcutta-New Jalpaiguri. It is a long-standing demand of the people of this area. We should promote trade with Bangladesh. In this connection, I had written a letter to the Minister for the restoration of railway line from Haldibari-Chilahati leading to Sealdah. That should be opened and taken up with the Government of Bangladesh. A train should be introduced between Dimapur-Calcutta as there is no train at present. I request the Government to expedite the survey to connect Sikkim by rail. I also request the Government to expedite the construction of double line between New Jalpaiguri-Guwahati. In this connection, I have already stated that some amount has been sanctioned for the construction of New Jalpaiguri-Ambari Falakata railway line. To my knowledge that work has been done. So, the extension work has to be undertaken with that money.

Another important request is to provide computer reservation facilities at all stations in North Bengal. In North Bengal the coaches of almost all the trains are in a dilapidated condition. Those should be replaced immediately. An express train should be introduced from Guwahati-Dimapur to Jaipur, Mumbai, Puri, Jammu, Dehradun, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Asansol. Reservation quota should be increased at Siliguri, New Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri.

Another important problem which I would like to highlight is about electrification. At least in the North Bengal, electrification work should be undertaken so that electric trains could be run. My next request is to construct fly-over at Dalkhola. It has to be taken up seriously. That is a standing problem of the area. Another fly-over should be constructed at Mohitnagar which is the gateway to North-Eastern States. I request the hon. Minister to construct some railway gates in order to avoid accidents in North Bengal on the Delhi-Guwahati Rajdhani route.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : I am concluding.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You get just half a minute to conclude.

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : I will take only one-fourth of a minute and finish.

Construction of the Eklakhi-Balurghat new railway line should be expedited and should be completed within in a few months.

Similarly, railway pass and medical facilities should be extended to the Railway Commission Vendors.

*SHRI M. SELVARASU (Nagapattinam) : Madam chairperson, let me convey my thanks for your giving me this opportunity to take part in the discussion on the Railway Budget.

23.16 hrs.

[SHRI NITISH KUMAR *in the Chair*]

Hon. Chairman, Sir, at the outset I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. Hon. Railway Minister has spared the II Class passengers from the hike in fare. He has also left untouched the price of the Platform Tickets. I would like to thank the Railway Minister for this.

Railways are not run with mere profit motive and commercial considerations. Railways are expected to uplift the backward areas. It has to carry forward the development process and it has to function as a public utility service and it is planned to be so. I am proud to point out this underlying principle behind our operating this great Indian Railway system.

Railways are a dynamic symbol of the unity of the country. Cutting across several language-speaking and culturally diversified regions, Railways bring together the people of this country. Thereby the national integration is strengthened by the Railways.

Funds that are allocated from the National exchequer has to be divided judicially to benefit all the people living in different parts of India. But what is our experience? All these years after the independence we have always noticed that all the Railway Ministers have always been giving certain importance to their home States. Additional allocations have been made to the home States and home constituencies of the Railway Ministers. I presume that the States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala have not got their due share only because of the fact that there were no Railway Ministers hailing from these States. Except for Shri Santhanam, who was an Hon. Minister once, no one from Tamil Nadu was a Railway Minister. I would like to bring to the notice of the august House and the Hon. Railway Minister the fact that the people of Tamil Nadu feel annihilated. They should not be allowed to feel let down.

I represent the people of a reserved constituency. I represent downtrodden people. It is in the eastern coast of the country. It is towards the South-Eastern tip of the country. In geographical maps it will constitute the eastern boundary of the country on the coasts of Bay of Bengal. 60% of the people of my constituency are the Scheduled Caste people. It is an oil rich stretch of land. There is an harbour. Our region has Thanjavur and Nagapattinam, the ancient towns in the Coromandel region. This was part of the great Chola empire. Chola Kingdom was established and thrived over there. You get so many literary and historical references and evidences to prove the point. Chola region or the Coromandel region was always known to be fertile growing more of foodgrains. The abundance and the prosperity of the region have always been referred to in our ancient Tamil literature.

Continuously for several long years after that prosperous Chola Kingdom, and continuously later on even after the independence, Thanjavur and the surrounding regions have always been neglected. I would like to recall and bring to the notice of the House and the Railway Ministry about a commitment given to provide better rail communication facilities to this region. It was given by the then former Railway Minister, Hon. C.K. Jaffar Sharief who was in the previous Government. He had rightly understood the felt needs of the people. Nagore, the Islamic shrine which can be called as the Ajmer Sharif of the South is there in my constituency. Velankanni, the important and well renowned Catholic Church shrine is nearby. Shri C.K. Jaffar Sharief during his tenure in the Railway Ministry provided Rs. 138 crores to lay broad gauge Railway line linking Tiruchi and Nagore. In this budget for the year 1997-98, it has been indicated that laying of Tiruchi-Thanjavur Broadgauge Railway line would be completed by March, 1998. It gets a meagre allocation of Rs. 10 crores. I would like to highlight the need to link Tiruchi with Nagore via Thanjavur. I would like to know how you would be able to execute this project with a small sum apportioned.

Now surveys for New Railway lines and laying of New Rail lines are to be taken up in the North-Eastern States. I would like to congratulate the Railway Minister for this. Like wise Jammu-Kashmir region will have some more new railway lines. I welcome the move to allocate funds for those projects. But at the same time you must ensure that the ongoing projects are neither shelved nor slowed down.

Tiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondi-Vedaranyam-Kodiakarai section of railways in my constituency have faced with the cancellation of Train service. Even if it is not economically unviable the train services should go on considering the social obligations the Railways have to bear. When you are introducing new route, you must also take steps to revamp the existing and old rail routes, because they could be complementary to each other. I wish this government gives thought to it. The prosperity of the Nation, the prosperity of the people will have to be protected and preserved. Only then the people will have a sense of participation.

Chennai-Villupuram-Cuddalore-Mayiladuthurai-Thiruvaroor-Thiruthuraipoondi-Karaikhudi are linked by

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Tamil.

the operation of "Kamban Express", a train that touches most parts of my constituency. 6175-6176 Kamban Express running between Chennai and Karaikudi is bifurcated at Tiruvaroor. One part of it is directed to Nagore. The other part of the train is proceeding to Karaikudi. I am to request you run two different trains from Chennai as Kamban Express to Karaikudi and Nagore Andavar Express to Nagore. You have to take into consideration the fact that certain trains have already been withdrawn.

Our Hon. Railway Minister has announced about the introduction of many new trains in several routes. I welcome it. But I would like to point out that it is not at all justified to have cancelled certain train services.

Now at a time when we speak of Social Justice, at a time when we have a champion of Social Justice as Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan who is also a popular Dalit leader, we should not cancel the existing train services in certain rail routes. This will be like denying justice to those who get access to justice. So you may kindly resume 237 and 274 Bangalore-Nagore, Nagore-Bangalore trains which have been cancelled.

Agriculture is the main occupation and cultivation is the main economic activity in my constituency. Thanjavur is the rice bowl of Tamil Nadu and it used to be the granary of the South. Ours is Cauvery Delta region. In addition to it Vedaranyam and surrounding regions have salt fields. Rail wagons are needed to transport salt and foodgrains. Salt cannot be transported in open wagons. During monsoon season, the losses and wastage will be more. Hence more number of closed wagons should be provided. So there is a case for manufacturing more Railway wagons.

Likewise, there is a need for providing Computer Reservation system facilities to the people of my constituency. Thiruvaroor is now a district headquarters town. Necessary allocation should be made and sanction should be accorded. Computerised Reservation Centre should be set up in Thiruvaroor. There was a proposal to open a Computer Reservation Centre at Thiruvaroor in 1996. It was included in the list announced earlier. I understand that some officials especially those from the Southern Railway sought to change the list. Thiruvaroor has been taken off the list and some other town has been included in its place. This is a deliberate mistake on the part of some officials. We want justice to be rendered to us.

The former Railway Minister thought it fit to accord importance to the needs of the pilgrims who throng Nagore Dargah and Velankanni Church. Thanjavur Big temple is also a great Cultural heritage of India. Considering the tourist importance of this Region, Railways must come forward to give due consideration to complete both the ongoing projects and long pending proposals.

Reiterating agian that Rs. 10 crores of allocation is insufficient, I request you to sanction more. In 1997-98 alone more than Rs. 77 crores is required to complete this project. This will give facelift to our region and improve my constituency.

I fervently hope our Railway Minister would look into this and fulfil the long felt needs of the public in my constituency. He is a mass leader of the downtrodden and I can rightly expect him to attend to the needs of a backward area which is becoming an upcoming one to gain the past glory. He is championing the cause of the downtrodden. Their population is sizeable in my constituency. Farmers and fishermen are more in number over there. All these labourers in the unorganised sector are there and they should get social development through economic prosperity in our area. Placing these demands before the Railways Minister through this House, let me conclude my speech. Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget for the year 1997-98. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for having presented a budget which is not adversely affecting the common people and the poor people of this country consecutively for two years.

I would like to appraise the following things as meritorious highlights of this Budget, especially the non-increase of the fares of second class, ordinary tickets and also the platform tickets. The seacon ticket holders have not been burdened with overcharge. As far as the five per cent excess rate for sleeper charge is concerned, it is considered to be reasonable and genuine. But the 12 per cent freight increase will indirectly affect the common people and the poor people adversely. Even then, I would like to admire the hon. Minister of Railways for having exempted 15 articles which are essential commodities. These have been exempted from the freight hike.

I would also like to assess the Budget for the year 1997-98 as a balanced budget since no such huge fare hike is there. For the developmental activities, also an allocation has been made. This year, the revenue is also expected to be Rs. 1,800 crore. It is not touching the poor people and the common people. The burden is upon the rich class of the soriety. Hence, I would like to say that the railway budget is a pro-people Budget. It is a common people's budget. It is not burdening the poor people and the common people of the country. Hence, I would like to say that it is a balanced budget as far as the present situation is concerned. In the last Budget Speech also, I have highlighted the point that it is a right time to analyse whether the Indian Railways are having the reforms according to the needs and demands of the country. The Indian Railways need reforms so as to keep pace with the infrastructural needs of our country. So, it is a right time to discuss it.

We are not satisfying the demands of the people of the country either in the freight traffic or in the passenger traffic. It is very well established and it has been reported in the Background Note submitted by the Lok Sabha

[Shri N.K. Premchandran]

Secretariat as an overview of the Indian Railways. It has been very well said about the share of the Indian Railways in the total transport. It is a very important factor to be looked into, that is, in the year 1950-51, 88 per cent of the goods traffic was held by the Indian Railways.

As far as the passenger traffic is concerned, 74.2 per cent of the passenger traffic has been held by the Indian Railways. After 40 years, it has come down in the year 1991-92 to 46.6 per cent and the passenger traffic has come down to 28.8 per cent. The Report says that if thiss trend continues, in the year 2000 AD, it will come to 35 per cent and 13 per cent. So, it shows a considerable decline in the passenger traffic as well as the freight traffic. So, I would like to make a proposal before this august House and for consideraiton of the hon. Minister of Railways that the Indian Railways should have a plan at least to have a freight traffic growth of five per cent so that the share of Indian Railways to the total traffic should not decline and that would indirectly result in saving the fuel, especially the petroleum.

So, this aspect of freight as well as passenger traffic would have to be given priority. How much priority would have to be given in order that the goal is achieved is a matter which needs to be looked into. What is the remedy for improving the Railway network and Railway infrastructural facilities so as to be able to satisfy the demands of the people and the country? I would like to submit that it is quite astonishing to note that during the last one decade that is, from the year 1985-86 to the year 1995-96, the rate of increase in respect of the Railway network has been recorded at one per cent. What would be the fate of the Indian Railways if it goes on in such a way? It is because the demands of the people are increasing; freight traffic is also increasing and all other things are also accordingly increasing. But the Railway network is not increasing in proportion to the demands and needs of the country. This aspect needs to be looked into. There is no other way, no other alternative but to strengthen the network of the Indian Railways. For this to happen Budgetary support is also necessary. Even the Budgetary support is also declining; the Plan allocation is also declining. So, I would like to submit before this House that the Plan as well as the Budget allocation for the Railways should be increased considerably.

Sir, in this year's Budget, an amount of Rs. 400 crore has been allocated for laying new railway lines. It is not sufficient even for laying a single railway line. The amounts which have been allocated for doubling work and uni-gauge conversion are also very meagre. It is not up to the mark. So, in order to have a maximum expansion of the network of the Indian Railways so as to satisfy the demands of the people, due consideration should be given to this aspect.

I would also like to mention one thing in the Budget for the year 1997-98 and that is about the passenger amenities. We all are very much aware of the amenities which are being enjoyed by the passengers and the commuters. But it is astonishing to note in this year's Budget that the amount of Rs. 104 crore which was allocated for passenger amenities last year has been cut down to Rs. 80 crore in this year's Budget. There has been a reduction of Rs. 24 crore on this account. That means with a reduction of Rs. 24 crore on the passenger amenties account, the present amenities which are avaibable to the passengers would also go down. Even with last year's allocation on passenger amenities, the facilities and amenities were not sufficient and if now the hon. Minister of Railways is going to cut down the budgetary allocation on this account then the passenger amenities and facilities would be very poor. So, this aspect has to be reconsidered in order that at least the *status-quo* that is, the last year's allocation of Rs. 104 crore is provided.

Sir, I would also like to make a submission regarding the safety aspect. According to the report "Overview-Indian Railways", 80 per cent of the accidents occur due to human failure. Why is it being allowed to go on like this? According to me, it is so because there is no provision for stringent action. If anybody is found guilty then serious stringent action has to be taken against him so as to ensure the safety of the passengers. This aspect would also have to be taken into consideration. Keeping in view the conditions that are prevailing in the country today, I, in general and in its totality, support this Budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : I would conclude by referring to some of the problems of my State. My learned friends from Kerala have already mentioned most of the points. My State of Kerala has been grossly neglected by the Ministry of Railways. In the first part of my speech though I appreciated and congratulated the Railway Minister; yet I would also like to submit with a heavy heart that my State of Kerala has been grossly neglected by the Ministry of Railways. I hope, he would be remembering that last time when the Budget was presented in this House during the year 1996-97, we protested in this House. The hon. Railway Minister convened a meeting of all the MPs. We had a very good dinner and after that we submitted the proposals to him. The Railway officials were also present there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You should have done it before dinner. You actually sbumitted everything after dinner.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : No, Sir. We submitted it before dinner.

MR. CHAIRMAN : But you mentioned you submitted everything after dinner.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Sir, even in the Demands for Supplementary Grants also so many assurances were given about introducing one superfast train from Delhi to Thiruvananthapuram.

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR SINHA (Ghazipur) : Still you are supporting the Budget!

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : I am supporting the Budget in general but it is not a regionally balanced Budget. I would like to submit that as far as Kerala is concerned, it is not a regionally balanced Budget. The allocation for the State last year was Rs. 117 crore and it has come down to Rs. 34 crore in this year's Budget. What is the reason for this? I appreciate and I am happy that the Railway Minister has revealed this fact. He has already committed that this amount would be enhanced. But we would like to know as to how it happened. We are not for the enhancement but how has the allocation of Rs. 117 crore come down to Rs. 34 crore?

In every work there is a cut in the finances. The frequency of trains has not been enhanced. About extension of train service, I would submit an interesting fact. In the last year's Budget it was announced, "regarding extension of trains, Howrah-Cochin express will be extended to Tiruvananthapuram." An interesting fact to be noted is, this year it is given as, "Cochin-Howrah express". There is no difference between the two. The same thing has been repeated in this Budget. It is actually an exercise in mochkery. As already stated by the learned Member Shri Ramesh Chennithala, the funds are being earmarked but they are not being spent. It is being neglected totally.

I demand that a Railway Zone for Kerala should be set up. We want a separate Zone so as to rectify the mistakes. The Bokaro-Alleppey express should be extended up to Kollam. The Howrah-Cochin express needs to be extended up to Quilon since doubling has been completed up to Quilon. Regarding Madurai-Kollam passenger train No. 727, I have made several requests before the authorities concerned, especially the Zonal Managers. But there has been no response from them. These little things can be done by them but there is no response coming forth from them. I represent that No. 727 Madurai-Kollam passenger train be extended up to Kayamkulam. The frequency of push-pull trains should be increased. Kollam-Bangalore weekly train has to be made regular. I have already submitted about new trains

There was an Excutive Engineer's office for carrying out doubling work in Quilin. Months before, it was learnt that it was going to be shifted or closed down. The Executive Engineer has been transferred now and some members of staff have also been transferred. It will indirectly mean that the office is going to be shifted. By this the doubling work between Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram will be affected. So, I would submit before the hon. Minister that this office should not be shifted and that the doubling work be continued.

Once again, I mark my protest against the unjustifiable negligence shown towards Kerala. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS (Karimganj) : Thank you, Chairman, Sir. I rise not to wholly oppose the Railway Budget for 1997-98 but, at the same time, not to support it altogether. There are some changes which we may appreciate as, for example, our North-East is well-covered with several promises. I hope the same will be materialised very soon.

There is introduction of new trains, extension of the run of some express and mail trains, increase of frequency or more trains, introduction of diesel multiple units in areas not served by electrified lines etc. But in this connection I should say that in Assam not a single kilometre is there which is electrified.

The decision not to increase second-class fares will go a long way to give relief to common rail users. In connection with relief of long distance passengers from overcrowding, I should say that at present dacoities in trains have become a day to day affair. In this respect the Railway Ministry has miserably failed to check it.

This Railway Budget is totally silent as regards creation of new Divisions although six zones have already been inaugurated and construction work is going on.

There are 24,544 unmanned railway level crossings and each is awfully exposed to serious accidents. No precautionary measures have been devised in this regard.

I should refer to one thing here. An amount of Rs. 25 crore was provided for manning five hundred railway level crossings in the Railway Budget for 1994-95. But in this present Budget, there is no such announcement. I have been demanding for a railway overbridge at Karimganj railway junction where there is every possibility of accidents taking place because of heavy traffic jams. But till date, nothing has been done in this respect.

I should say that in Class I and II services, the percentage of SCs and STs is a microscopic minority. As far as the backlog is concerned, it has yet to be cleared.

My constituency Karimganj, in Assam, comprises of Karimganj and Hailakandi districts bordering Banladesh. It is neglected in this Budget because construction of the extension line from Dullabcherra to Ranpur in Karimganj-Dullabcherra branch section has not been taken up although two lakhs of people of southern Karimganj district have been demanding for the same since 1977. Apart from my own constant efforts since 1991, Badarpur railway junction of Karimganj district has not been upgraded as a railway division wihch is a nerve centre for rail services in the entire southern Assam. Moreover, it has rail links with Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

Sir, there are no facilities for computerised reservation at Badarpur and Karimganj railway junctions. There are only unimproved platforms and retiring rooms. Most of the stations in my constituency are devoid of platform sheds. There are worn out coaches and engines. Regarding the withdrawal of trains from branch

[Shri Dwaraka Nath Das]

sections, particularly in the backward areas, I should say that there is some secret understanding between the surface transport and the rail transport. One of the prestigious trains of southern Assam, the Cachar Express is yet to originate from Karimganj junction of Karimganj district. Two trains, that is, Cachar Express and Barak Valley Express originate from Silchar. My demand was that at least one should start from Karimganj junction, but this is not done.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, please conclude, Shri Dwaraka Nath Das.

SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS : In my constituency, a survey from Lala station to Bhairangti extension line service in the Mizoram border has been made. But in this present Budget there is no mention of it.

As I said in the beginning, Karimganj has been deprived of in this Budget. Hon. Railway Minister himself visited Southern Assam on 22nd January, 1997. He had promised many things. But, practically, he has not given anything to my Constitutency, Karimganj-SC of Assam.

With these few words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA (Jammu) : Mr. Chairman, I rise to the support the Railways Budget. I am deeply grateful to the Railway Minister for making a provision of 100 crores in this year's budget for Jammu-Kashmir especially for the construction of a rail line from Udhamur to Baramulla in Kashmir. It is a welcome step to bring the people of Jammu-Kashmir in the national mainstream. I feel that with the extension of railway line to Baramulla or from Jammu to Pooch, the people of Jammu would gladly come in the national mainstream and it will also put a check on the inference by Pakistan and China. It would strengthen our defence. I congratulate the present Governemt on the behalf of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and other Memberes from the State and on my behalf for making sincere efforts to take the rail-line beyond Jammu. I would like to say that before 1947, there was rail line from Sailkot to Jammu but after the partition this rail line was closed and during the hence of Smt. Indira Gandhi the rail line was laid from Pathankot to Jammu, on which trains run upto Jammu only. During Smt. Gandhi Government, a proposal to construct the rail line from Jammu to Udhampur was mooted and Smt. Gandhi laid the foundation stone in Udhampur in 1983 for the construction of rail line. It will still take a long time to complete this work. I request the Minister for Railways to immediately transfer the office of Chief Engineer (Construction) from Delhi to Jammu so that the construction work could be superwised properly and the rail line from Jammu to Udhampur could be completed by 1999. As per my information, the Prime Minister is to lay the foundation stone of Udhampur-Baramulla railway line on 15th March in Udhampur and construction work will start on Udhampur-Baramulla section. I would request you that the construction work should be started in both Udhampur and Baramulla and the construction work should be assigned equally to small contractors so that the local people get employment opportunities.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You want that the construction work should be started from both sides and foundation stone should also be laid on both sides.

SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA : The construction work should be started from both sides so that local people of both the places as well as people of Kashmir got employment opportunities.

Similarly I want that doubling of Jalandhar-Jammu railway track should be undertaken soon so that trains on this section could run properly.

I am glad that all the honourable Members who participated in this discussion have all in one voice supported the projects in the Railway budget for North eastern states and Jammu and Kashmir. I would like that there honourable Members should also urge the Finance Minister of the time of discussion on general budget to allocate sufficient funds for Railways so that work could be started on all the projects included in this year's Railway budget and some construction work could be carried out in all the states in the country.

I would also urge upon the Railway Minister to provide basic aminities at the Jammu Railway Station where a large number of devotees then up for the 'darshan' or Mata Vaisno Devi every year. Terminal facilities should also be provided at this station. Besides Jammu and Kashmir should also be connected with other parts of the country through Railways to enable the people from all parts of the country to come here to have a view of the sacred Mata Vesno Devi and the people of this area could get all the facilities.

Now I would like to raise a few demands of my area.

MR. CHAIRAMAN : Please enamerate your demands quickly.

SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA : I would again urge upon the Minister for Railways to complete the survey work of Jammu Poonch-Rajouri line at the earliest so that construction of this rail line could be commenced as three cities Jammu Poonch and Rajouri are situated on the Pakistani border. The construction of this rail line would not only strengthen our defence line in this area but also benefit the backward people of this area.

Though I wanted to mention several things but without taking much of your time. I would, at last like to make a mention of the serious problem of unemployment. At present as many as names of 2 lakh unemployed youths are registered Employment officers.

MR. CHAIRMAN : O.K. you mention it at the time of discussion on general budget.

SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA : I would like to state that our youths should be given jobs in the departments of Railways and Government as a special case.

With these words I strongly support the Railway budget and also every compliments to Chairman of Railway board as well as the Prime Minister from the care of my heart for doing justice with Jammu and Kashmir and allocating substantial funds for our state to undertake construction work on all the progress included in the Railway budget for connecting Jammu and Kashmir to all parts of the country I once again convey my sincere thanks to the Railway Minister.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for allowing me to speak at this hour when at the stroke of the midnight the date would change and with God grace I shall be able to live up to this change. On this occasion, first of all I convey my sincere thanks to the Railway Minister for presenting a such an revolutionary budget. Ours is a very large country with a population of 90 crores. It has got 22 thousand Kms rail lines.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Barq, please come to the issues directly instead of going into the background as we have time constraint.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : Alright Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The length of rail lines in the country is more than 62 thousand kms, not 22 thousand kms. It you have some issues relating to your state or consistuency, please mention them quickly instead of dwelling upon the background.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : I leave the issues pertaining to my state though my state has been the largest state of the country some extent, ignored. I now come on to my native place. Sambhal is a historic place which had been the capital during the regime of King Prithviraj and a province under Moughal period. However, unfortunately it is now a Tehsil only. It has a population of 3 lakhs. Sambhal has been linked with Sambhal-Moradabad branch line. It has not yet been linked with the main line due to which this city as well as the surrounding areas have been backward and are lagging in development.

I would urge the Railway Minister link Sambhal with Gajrola via Hasanpur, I had submitted this request to the Minister for Railways at the time of last Railway budget also. This time also I have given this request in writing and he has assured me to link Sambhal with Gajrola via Hasanpur. Therefore, I earnestly request the Railway Minister to link Sambhal with main line so that Sambhal and surrounding area could see the light of development and people of this area are benefited.

Sambhal is a large town. Asia's largest mandi (market) of Mentha is situated here. It is also a big mandi (market) of grain and potatoes. It is big business centre. However, this city has not yet been linked up with the main railway line which has reached in all the nook and corners of the country.

Since childhood, I have thought that the rail line ends in Sambhal. It is a matter of great sorrow. It is my earnest request that Ghaziabad to Bareilly rail line on Delhi-Lucknow main line which is at present a single line, should be doubled, so that electric train could also be run on the line. Many V.I.Ps. and large number of people travel on this route. Therefore, this line should be doubled. I would take minister to note it down.

I have to make one more request that there is not direct train from Moradabad to Ajmer Sharif. A lot of people go to Ajmer Sharif daily on business trip also. But no diesel train is available. A direct train should be introduced from Moradabad to Ajmer Sharif for the convenience of the local people.

The checking staff of Railways is the victim of injustice. I have given a request to the Minister in writing that both the checking staff as well as the running staff work in the similar conditions yet there is a no parity in their salaries. They travel in the same train together but there is wide disparity in their salaries. They are the victims of worst kind of injustice. Before 1931 there was no such difference. Two guards (Running stall) and T.T.Es. (checking staff) are not getting equal salaries. I request you to bridge this gap and make an announcement to this effect in this year. The Railway Minister is present in the House.

24.00 hrs. [13.3.1997]

At this point of time, my main point is Sambhal rail line and when the Minister of Railways replies to the debate...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. Why are you repeating your earlier demand? Everything has been included in the proceedings. The date has also changed.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : Yes, the date has changed, let the fate also change.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You had desired that the date should change while you are speaking. The date has changed.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : I have not been able to speak for a minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, you have spoken for 9 minutes.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : Would you not give me more time.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is over. You have been given a chance to mention the issue of your consistency.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : Sir, you have allowed others to speak for 20-30 minutes but it is unfortunate.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I allowed the Members to speak for that long yesterday, not today. It is alright now you take a minutes or two. You are not being deprived of your right, you have given the chance.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ : If this so, I conclude with this couplet :

"Mohabbat karne wale gam se ghabraya nahin karate;
Shikayat kya, Laboan par aah bhi laya nahin karate."

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak in favour of this budget.

I would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for what he has done in such a short period for the entire nation. The Railway Budget evokes a lot of reactions. I have noticed a reaction, from an hon'ble Member who has been a former Railway Minister and has been representing Bihar throughout. His reaction was one amongst many other reactions from other hon'bel Members. He has said that this budget is for Bihar or for a region. He was convinced that the budget marked a turn for the worse. I think that he might not have made such a remark on the loans of merits and demerits but out of jealous or ill mill since he has been a representative from Bihar, had been the Railway Minister and had not done anything at that time. When, today something is being done then it is but natural far him to be jealous.

When a number of hon. Members from Bihar used to rise to speak the people used to think it was the budget of Bihar or Poorvanchal. Briefly I would like to submit that it is not the budget of Bihar. You know that Bihar is not merely a source of income. Even the English had taken mineral resources from Bihar and they had sent even the muscle power of Bihar abroad. The same is going on even today. If the mineral resources of Bihar are used in that state itself then it will certainly be good to Bihar but this just does not happen. Now, when some welfare measures are under taken in Bihar, the people become restless. I would like to make it clear by citing a simple example that after independence the development of railway in Bihar could not take place proportionately. I would like to submit that population-wise Bihar is the second largest state in the country after Uttar Pradesh.

As per the census of 1991 the population of Bihar was 8.63 crore. It has 5283 kilometers of railway line. The population of Gujarat was around 4.11 crore and it has 5320 kilometers of railway line which is more that of Bihar. The population of Madhya Pradesh is 6.61 crore and it has 6000 kilometers of railway line. The population of Rajasthan is 4.38 crore and only 5.924 kilometers of railway line has been laid in it. Likewise the population of Andhra Pradesh is 6.63 crore and the railway line there is 5057 kilometers long. Similarly Maharashtra has the population of 7.87 crore and the railway line is 5462 kilometers. It does not mean that I am against any particular state, that there should be no railway line. It should be everywhere but nothing could happen in Bihar till date. If we take up the data of the last five years we will find before this Government of the United Front took over, we will find that only 5000 kilometers of railway line was laid there but as far as I know that 40 kilometers of railway line laid is not included in those 5000 kilometers. Therefore, Bihar was given step motherly treatment. But the hon. Railway Minister, Shir Ram Vilas Paswan, has done justice to Bihar and has not deprived Bihar of its right. He has tried to give Bihar its due but it did not get its due in full. The people of Bihar have a ray of hope that their rights would not be usurped. I would like to speak about my constituency, the Britishers had laid 16 kilometers of railway line from Nirmal to Maptiyahi lying in the Kosi area and 38 kilometres of railway line from Bheem Nagar to Pratap Ganj. The floods have destroyed this line but none is worried about laying the line again. Funds were made available by this Government for a survey there since when ten months have passed but the survey of only 100 kilometers of railway line has been done. Out of that the survey of the 16 kilometers of railway line from Nirmali to Maptiyahi, has not been got done by the railway officers even in ten months. Nirmali is a part of Saupaul district. One has to travel by road to reach Saupaul from Nirmali and if one goes via Nepal then 100 kilometers of distance has to be traversed. If the people of Nirmal want to go to Saupaul from India then they have to cover a distance of 300 kilometers and have to pass from 6 districts. Attention should be paid towards this severe problem of the residents of that area. My submission is that the hon. Railway Minister should pay attention towards these problems and find out a solution to these.

At the time of the last Railway Budget speech it was said that if the proposal of road overbridge comes from the State Government, it would be completed. It was also said that the State Government does not want to give its share. But the Government of Bihar has sent six proposals of road overbridges. You can merely claim about the road overbridge of Ara the State Government has not given the amount in it. The State Government has given its share four all the other five places, be it the overbridge of Hazipur or Parasnath, the scheme of which has been postponed or be it Sindri or fatuas, the work has not started on it. The process of land acquisition has been going on there, therefore the Government of Bihar is nowhere fault with regard to the overbridges. A proposal to construct road overbridge at Saharasa was sent on 22.11.96 but the same has not been included in this budget. I want that it should be sanctioned. The inauguration of the work of modernisation was done on 4th November, 1996 and the funds were also made available but not even a

single rupee has been spent on it. The gauge conversion of 155 kilometer of railway line from Saharasa to Farbisganj was sanctioned and its foundation stone was laid. The construction work of it was taken up in a limited area. The number 51 bridge, which is a big one was to be constructed at the cost of rupees 9 crore. The Railway Budget was presented quite sometime ago but the construction work could not be undertaken. Merely 8 crore rupees have been earmarked for it this year. He (the Minister) has said that this line would be functional within three years but the work on it has been started in a limited area. If he wishes to sanction rupees 8 crore yearly then it would take more than 10 years. Therefore more amount should be allotted.

There is a computer at Saharsa junction. It has been linked with Delhi circuit only on account of which Howrah bound passengers have to face a lot of problems. It should be linked to other circuits also. Hon. Minister, Sir the decision of gauge conversion of 87 kilometers of railway line from Khagaria to Samastipur has been taken but the distance of 8 kilometers from Khagaria Mausi is not proposed to be covered. It should also be included in it. Likewise there should be a foot overbridge at Saupaul station. Name of the station? A waiting room and generation should be provided at Simri Bakhtiyarpur station, since it is a good market and division. Likewise, a shed should be provided at the entire platform at Radhopur station. Likewise a shed should also be provided at platform number 4 at Mausi junction. The office of the Divisional Railway Manager should be set up at Saharsa.

I would like to draw your attention towards a serious problem now. The hon. Member Shri Brahama Nand ji Mandal has put up a question, which is not only the question of his constituency but the question of the entire Northern Bihar. I know, that you have problem but you should connect Khagria to Mungher through Railway line. The Northern Bihar is a backward area. If it is connected, it would develop. A railway survey should be conducted from Kopria to Bihariganj. The railway line from Pratapganj to Bhimnagar is in ruins, it should be constructed. A decision regarding Saharsa to Darbhanga via Biraul has also been taken.

At last, I would like to conclude, saying two things. There is no train for Patna from Saharsa, Madhepura and Saupaul falling under Kosi area. A broad gauge railway line is being constructed from Hazipur to Badhwara, therefore there would be no direct train from Saharsa to Hazipur. My submission is that there should be a direct train from Mausi to Patna. Janki Express steams off from Katiyar at 7.15 A.M. and on account of it the passengers coming from Calcutta side do not get the train. Therefore, my submission is that it should be run half an hour after its present scheduled time.

I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity too speak and I support the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri A. Sampath.

AN HON. MEMBER : Sir, Shrimati Phoolan Devi is the only lady Member sitting here. She can be allowed to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It cannot be done like that. She has sent her name just now. Moreover, a Member from her party has just spoken.

SHRI A. SAMPANTH (Chirayinkil) Mr. Chairman, Sir, good morning. It Is IST 0010. I hope I am the last Member speaking from Kerala.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think every Member from Kerala has spoken.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : Not yet, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Are there still some Members left?

SHRI A. SAMPATH : Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right.

SHRI A. SAMPATH : Sir, we all support this Government. We have differences of opinion regarding political matters, political perspectives, views and differences in ideologies. But that does not matter, especially in the developmental activities of our State.

I support this Budget and I appreciate the task that was fulfilled by our hon. Railway Minister. The preparation, presentation, passing of the Railway Budget are a Herculean task and I congratulate Shri Ram Vilas Paswan for undertaking such a Herculean task.

There is a saying in the South, especially in my State, that if the Britishers had not come to India, my State would not have got even a single piece of railway track. The length of the railway track that we got after India became a Republic, is too meagre. I am very much ashamed of it.

There is also a saying in the South that the Central Government, especially the Railway Ministry is always acting like a compass because it is always looking towards the North and it is neglecting the South. I am happy that there was a change in the last year's Budget and I hope that there will be a change in this year's Budget also in the Minister's reply to the debate that we expect from the hon. Minister on the coming day.

We have certain grievances to put forth. We do not have sufficient number of trains, we do not have sufficient number of bogies and we do not have sufficient amenities for the passengers. I come from a constituency which is towards the South of Kerala. I am representing the constituency of Chirayinkil.

The famous and the most important pilgrim place of southern Kerala is Varkala. It is the *Samadhi* place of Lord Shri Narayana Guru. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan had come there and had spoken to a large crowd there. Shri Narayana Guru was not only a philosopher but a saint and a social reformer also. I would like to say that when the 6303/6304 Vanchinadu Express was initiated, a stop

[Shri A. Sampath]

was provided at Varkala. But, later on, that stop was removed. Certain new stops were allowed. But, still, even after years and years of requests this stop has not been restored. Requests have been made for the past some 3-5 years. All the requests have fallen on deal ears. The stop has not been restored so far. This is a cruelty and humiliation shown to Lord Shri Narayana Guru himself.

Sir, I would like to invite your attention to one major thing which is a very important matter. There was a proposal for establishing a coach yard at Thiruvananthapuram the capital city of Kerala. At first the proposed site was at Nemom nine kilometres towards the south of Thiruvananthapuram Central station. Later, it was stated that it was going to be established at Kochuveli, which is nine kilometres towards north of Thiruvanathapuram Central station. Now we do not know whetner it is going to be established or not or whether it is going to be taken to some other State. It is quite a pity. We would like to know whether the Ministry of Railways is going to establish it at Thiruvananthapuram or not and if they are going to establish it, he may please tell the place where he is going to establish it.

In his reply to the Budget discussions last year, our hon. Minister of Railways had promised to convene a conference and meetings or M.Ps. Zonal wise. That has not taken place. All of us, senior railway officials and M.Ps., travel by either first class or A.C. class; if not, I would like to say that we all travel by air. We must definitely see what is happening to the poor passengers. The Railways are the poor man's mode of travel. It is the only mode of travel that a poor man can afford. As the hon. Minister has stated, the Indian Railways has a social outlook and social obligation which has to be fulfilled. I request the hon. Minister or Railways, through you, that we must have more second class coaches or bogies.

Sir some representations from women's organisations were put forth to the hon. Minister of Railways as well as to the Railway Board, that in all the trains the bogey or the coach reserved for ladies is towards the end of the train. That itself creates certain inconvenience for the ladies. The women's organisations and even the National Commission for Women have made a request and I also submit that the ladies' compartment, should be in the middle of the train, between the first class coaches or in between the second class coaches.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : If they are in the last portion of the train, and if they have made a demand that the coach should be in the middle, that will be in the middle of the train.

SHRI A. SANPATH : Thank you.

Sir, Kerala has its own problems because of the density of the population. More than three million people are living outside the State. This is the major transport system that we have. We want more funds and we want a more speedy development of the Railways. As all other Members from my State have spoken so much elaborately, I do not repeat what they have stated.

Sir, last but not least, there is another thing which is important. Crores of rupees have been invested for implantation of the lifting barriers at various level crossings. But these lifting barriers are not working now. Even after the implantation these lifting barriers are not working for the past two years. They are just put there and they are not working.

In the last Budget, the only railway overbridge which was provided for Kerala was at Varkala in my constituency. Some seventeen lakh rupees were provided for it. The construction has not yet started. I fear that if this work is not started the funds will be diverted somewhere else.

So, while concluding, I request that the work of the railway overbridge may be started at Varkala immediately.

I thank you for the opportunity given.

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR SINHA : Mr. Chairman Sir, first of all I would like to thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to express my views though a bit late.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your turn was a little later but I have allowed you to speak before.

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR SINHA : I thank you very much. Since I am speaking on this topic for the first time therefore I would like to have your special attention. Otherwise I am not an encomist to go into the details of qualities. I think that there is nothing should in the budget which should be supported. It has no direction and no merit what so ever it can not be supported by any opposition. The hon. Railway Minister has tried to earn encomiums while presenting the budget of 1997-98. I would like to start from his speach before dwelling on the other reactions on it. Shri Nitish Kumar ji has said that there were mixed reactions on it. I would not like to stretch that topic but I think that stribing a balance in the increase of feight and fare is always the burning issue. I would not like to go into the details of what has happened in this budget since many speakers have given went to their views on this topic. I would like to mention 2-3 main points. With regard to the increase in the feight the industrial and business institutions have estimated that last year the increase of 10 percent and this year also the increase of 12 percent would lead to inflation. At the time when Manmohan Singh ji presented the budget, he had earned much praise and had said that the inflation would he confined to a single digit but today the business organisations have estimated that after this Railway Budget and the Budget the rate of inflation would stabilise at the figure of 12. I do not think that there is anything in it which can be supported I think that the hon. Railway Minister had not at all paid his attention towards the security, safety and punctuality

aspects in the railway. I was very much surprised when two hon. Members of this House, who support this Government, halted a train like Rajdhani Express at such a place where it did not have a stoppage. There is no mention of the trains which cover the long distance and the people travel in these trains just to reach their destinations in time. If such trains are stopped at will those who support this Government then I do not think that the trains would be able to sun in this country. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister specially towards this issue that action should be taken against anyone who does not abide by the law. Specially, those who work on your support in this manner, I think that it is his responsibility and he must pay attention towards it. The railway analysts claim that the ratio of freight and fare during 1950-51 was such that a single fare upto one kilometer was equal to the freight of one tonne of goods. Today the situation is that the ratio is 1:3. At the time of independence it was one each to half and today it is one each to three.

The hon. Minister in his budget speech has said that railway is not merely a commercial organisation but it shoulders social liability also. I am at a loss to know which social responsibility they are going to shoulder. How would the railways discharge its social liability. The increase in freight is not 22 per cent. It seems to be 22 per cent but when this hike will be 12 per cent on 110, I think that the total hike would be 23 per cent. It can be very well understood as to how much the people will have to suffer on account of this. The Minister has himslef been a victim of it. Therefore, I expect from him that he would think over it. Not because I am saying so but I think that all the hon. Members of this House have drawn his attention towards it. I understand his compulsion that he lacks funds but to what extent the freight would be increased due to the paucity of funds? I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister that so far as the issue of separating the sleeper class and the ordinary class is concerned, this campaign is run by the mobile squad but what it does is nothing but merely loot. When the illiterate and rural person boards the sleeper class they extort money from him by threatening him to send him to jail and recover the amount from him arbitrarily. Half of the amount goes in their pocket and the rest half goes to the Railways. I am unable to understand what sort of saving the railway is going to do through it You will not believe but there are such railway stations where you go to the booking window of railway during day time and ask for a ticket of sleeper class, believe it that perhaps there is not leven a single railway station of the country where you will get a ticket of sleeper class during ordinary days. Therefore, my submission to him is that he must pay attention towards it.

So far as discharging social responsibilities is concerned, senior officers of railway are leading a luxurious life and are involved in corruption. Hence I think that Government should also pay Its attention to this aspect. There is a big difference in the salary of lower class employees and these officers. The Hon. Minister belonged to the socialism background. If he does not pay attention towards it, I understand that he cannot fulfil the promise he made to the members of Parliament from various States. The loss of Rs. 5000 crore has not been made good. Then how can he tide cover it.

Mr. Chairman, sir, I know that Mafias are involved in thefts in railway and they are getting political patronage. I do not want to repeat the thing that was said here about land but the hon. Minister has taken a step in the matter of transparency. Whatever he is purchasing he will retain that and publise the price list. But corruption is rampant in this deal also. We were expecting that he will take stringent action against this mal practice because he used to do such fits in his younger days.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You please tell me as to what are your suggestions in regard to corruption?

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR SINHA : I am giving it in writing and if you give me permission and time, I can tell.

MR. CHAIRMAN : They meet daily so there is no need to give in writing, you can tell him.

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR SINHA : Indian railways is symbol of Indian nationality. I am very happy that a survey has been conducted of Jammu and Kashmir and North East areas but I think that there are more backward areas in the country and due attention has not been paid to them. I come from the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh. The contribution of this area is not less than any other parts of the country in the struggle of independence. Although India got freedom on 15th August but in this area that flag of independence was flown on the 8th August. The people of this area faced the bullets of the Britishers. The Hon'ble Prime Minister calls himself to be a son of farmer and I am confident that he would look into the background underwhich the farmers of this country launched agitation. You must have heard the name of Swami Sahjanand ji. He was born in our district but this area has been neglected completely. The areas of Ghazipur, Balia come under it. Therefore I request that...

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is true that he was born in your area but his place of work was Bihar.

SHIR MANOJ KUMAR SINHA : I thank you for enriching my knowledge. I was going to say that there was a metre guage line in Varanasi-Balia. After guage conversion two trains are running on it but they do not stop at any station of this area. The train which was passing through Mirzapur, Balia, Vanaras, Lucknow, Guhawati has been withdrawn. I had requested verbally and in writing that a DMU be introduced between Balia and Varanasi. There is a village called Gahmar having a population of 50 thousand in our area. The number of soldiers contributed to army by this village is more

[Shri Manoj Kumar Sinha]

than the contribution of a district. The people of this area have demanded that Farakka Express should be stopped there. Even today 3700 retired army personnels live in this village. I request that attention be paid towards it. The Prayagraj Express runs between New Delhi and Allahabad. I request that it should be extended upto Varanasi. Not only Varanasi but entire eastern Uttar Pradesh would be benefited by it.

Earlier the people of Uttar Pradesh used to say that because they make Prime Ministers this state could not develop. But today it has been seen that only that state is being developed from where the Prime Minister and Railway Minister come. I think that Hon'ble Prime Minster and Railways Minister should work above this psyche and think about the entire India. I request the Hon. Minister to work in this manner. I am very happy that he has provided funds to Bihar. Bihar has been neglected for many years. Uttar Pradesh is cursing itself. Please consider about it.

With these works I thank you.

*SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Mr. Chairman Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget, 1997-98. I congratulate the Hon'ble Ministers Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and Shri Satpal Maharaj for presenting a well balanced Budget.

Karnataka had no place in the map of Indian Railways few years ago even through several persons from Karntaka became Railway Ministers Eminent leaders Shri Kengal Haumantaiah, Shir Jaffer Sharief, Shri H.C. Dasappa and Shri Jeorge Fernandes became Railway Ministers.

These leaders did service to the nation but they neglected the state of Karnataka. They could not provide better railway facilities to the people of Karnataka. Shri Jaffar Sharief took the intiation and introduced some new trains in Karnataka. He took up certain gauze conversion work also. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and Shri Satpal Maharaj are determined to improve the railway facilities for the people of Karnataka.

The narrow gauze line between Yelahanka and Bangrpet is more then 100 years old and the length of the railway line in my constituency is only 147 k.m. The gauze conversion work between Yelahanaka and Chikkaballapura has been completed. The length of this portion of railway line is 70 k.m. The gauze conversion work between Kolar and Bangarpet is at the verge of completion. This 96 k.m. long line conversion work was to be completed by March 31, 1997. The Hon'ble Minister in his reply to my representation has stated that the work would be completed on time. The work between Chikkaballapura and Kolar has not yet started. The length of this line is 80 k.m. only. This work should be taken up immediately.

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Kannad.

Gauze doubling between Bangalore and Jolarpet is also a very old demand of the people of Karnataka. Major portion of the work is over. The work between Kuppam and white field has not progressed. Similar is the case of electrification. Electrification between Jolarpet and Chennai was over long ago. Unfortunately electrification is still pending between Bangarpet and Bagalore. The trunk line between Bangalore and Chennai is very much affected as it is only a single line between Kuppam and white fied. Here, many times the trains have to halt hours together.

Lalbagh train should have a stop at Bangarpet as it is a very important commercial centre in Karnataka.

Bangalore-Salem broadgauge line has been completed and due to this four trains are being diverted. They are :

1. Bangalore-Kanyakumari Express,
2. Bangalore-Quilon Express,
3. Cochin-Rajkot and
4. Nagarkoil-Gandhigram.

For the past 35 to 40 years this Bangalore-Kanyakumari Express (Train 6525/6526) is running in the existing route via Bangarpet (only junction in Kolar District), Kuppam (Constituency of Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh) and Tirupathur (Tamil Nadu) connecting Salem, Coimbatore, Palghat, Trichur, Trirupur, Cochin, Trivendrum, Nagerkoil and Kanyakumari. This is the only train in this route which connects all these place thereby meeting the needs of Agriculturists, (to Buy/to repair submersible Motor Pumpsets from Coimbatore) Industrialists, thousands of Keralite families residing at KGF, Bangarapert, Kolar and other parts of Kolar District and adjoining taluks of Andhra Pradesh viz Kuppam, Palamaner, Chittor. This train enjoys good patronage and earnings to Railways at Bangarapet Junction which also caters to the needs of two Public Sector Giants. i.e. Bharat Earth Movers Ltd., and Bharat Gold Mines Ltd., KGF (just 10 kms away from Bangarapet junction).

It has been gathered that Southern Railway have proposed for this diversion in the newly laid route via. Hosur, Dharmapuri only to reduce the density of traffic on White Field and Kuppam Single line track (about 80 kms.) on this Bangalore-Chennai trunk route. It is also learnt that Conjetion of traffic on this single track line can be avoided when onece the on going Track Doubling Project between Whitefield and Kuppam is completed. It may be noted that this project is going on at Snails pace since May 1993 not even completing upto next station from white filed end for the past four years.

At this juncture it is not justified for Railways to divert a popular Train viz., Bangalore-Kanykumari Express and other three weekly trains running on the present route just for the sake of reducing the density

of traffic. It is also learnt that running of train on the existing route via Bangarapet, Kuppam is more economical and speedier on this electrified line than that of running the train with a Diesel Locopower (Saving of Foreign Exchange) on Single line through Ghat Section via Hosur-Dharmapur just to save an overall distance of 40 kms. only. People of this Land of Gold, Silk and Milk (i.e. Kolar District) have already shown their displeasure for snatching away the existing facilities (even though economical) by Railway through various letters, Telegrams, united Discussions by Traders, Businessmen, various passengers Associations and other public organisations with Divisional Railway Managar-Bangalore Division. Citizens of Bangarapet, KGF and Kolar have jointy made Rail-Roko agitation at Bangarpet juction on 02.02.1997 by stopping Chennai-Mysory Shathabdi and Bangalore-Chennai Lalbagh Express. It is also learnt that the Federation for Karnatake Chamber of Commerce & Industries Bangalore have already taken up this issue wtih your kind self.

In view of this, Hon'ble Ram Vilas Paswanji is requested to advise the concerned Railways authorities to immediately stop un-popular grogramme of diversion of trains on the new route by taking away the existing facility enjoyed by all the citizens of Kolar District since 35-40 years. Instead, you may advise the Railway Authorities to introduce new trains on the new route which will help travelling public of both areas.

Bangalore-Kanyakumari should have a stop at Malur also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Muniyappa, you need not explain the details. Please mention points only.

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Sir, this is a very old and popular route in my constituency. Four to five taluks are involved and five lakh people of this area are affected on account of ths diversion. Peaple have no any other alternative and we have to face them. About 5000 working persons of the Capital travel on this rout of Karnataka.

Jolarpet-Bangarpet passernger train is also a popular train of the common people and hence it should be extended upto Bangalore without any further delay.

Sir, most of the state capitals have many trains running between them and the nation's Capital. But strangely, Karnataka has only one daily train from Bangalore to New Delhi. The waiting list on this train invariably goes beyond 300 every day. It is a very difficult task to get confimed tickets in this train. I therefore, urge upon the Hon'ble Minister to make the Rajadhani Express which runs only once a week between Nizamuddin and New Delhi a daily train.

Gauze conversion work between Bangalore and Hyderabad should be completed at the earliest and a direct line should be provided for the commuters of these two Capital cities.

Similarly the conversion work between Chikkaballapura and Kobar should be completed before December, 1997 to avoid further agitations by the people of my constituency. At the same time this line should be linked to Madanapalli. This link would enable the people of the Bangalore and Kolar districts to go to Tirupathi most conveniently.

The amount allocated in the current Budget is not at all sufficient for completing the works mentioned above. I therefore, urge upon the Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Hon'bel Finance Mimister to allocate sufficient funds for completing these very long pending railway works in Karnataka.

Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak and with these words I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI C. NARASIMHAN (Krishnagiri) : I rise to support this Railway Budget. It is one of the revolutionary Railway Budgets. So, i would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for presenting such an excellent Budget which is pro-poor and pro-common man.

In his submission, the Railway Minister has said it clerly that railways are not only a commercial organisation but they are also an efficient public organisation for the development of the backward areas of this country. I wish and hope that this Government headed by our hon. Prime Minister Shri Deve Gowdaji will prove it to the nation. We are really proud of this. Another thing we are really proud of is that Indian railways are the only profit-making railways in the world.

Again while congratulating the Railway Minister, I would like to suggest the following points for consideration as also to implement a few demands to improve the service of the railways. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You should not get chance those members who are siting here continuously they should set opportunity.

Mamtaji has said carrect about you that after sleeping you have come here to speak.

SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATME : I do not sleep. Now. it is Morning.

MR. CHAIRMAN : As per English it is morning while with a view Bihari it is still night.

[English]

SHRI C. NARASIMHAN : The vital point is the shortage of funds for the railways. Track renewals, gauge conversion, new lines, electrification, doubling and surveys etc., are some of the important things for railways. But beyond these, the important thing for the railways is the generation of internal fund. I request the hon. Minister to consider conversion of waste lands and vast assets of the railways for the commercial

[Shri C. Narasimhan]

exploitation with the help of IRCON, CONCOR, IRFC, RIOTES in raising funds.

Another thing is about computerisation. Computerisation is very much needed for booking tickets for onward and inward journeys throughout the country.

The Railway Minister has said in his Budget speech that railway exhibitions will be organised in Delhi only. We request the hon. Minister to organise such exhibitions in all the four metro cities as also in Bangalore.

Satellite phones are to be provided in almost all the express trains throughout the country.

Importance should be given to small-scale industrial sector as railways are purchasing cloth worth Rs. 7,000 crore from them. I request the Ministry to consider giving job opportunities to lakhs of unemployed youth of this country mainly in the small-scale sectors.

Another thing is that the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission are not satisfactory to Class-III and Class-IV employees. I request the hon. Minister to reconsider these proposals.

Railways provides cloth to its employees. A new scheme has been introduced for providing cloth to its employess during winter season. But we have seen that practically the cloth supplied is not of good quality. I request the hon. Minister to kindly ensure the quality of the material.

I also request the hon. Minister to procure more number of coaches for passenger trains as also for wagons. The number of coaches for passengers be increased from 2000 to 2,200, thus making an increase of ten per cent.

Another point is, you are well aware that Tamil Nadu is the only State which provides cent per cent support to this Government as also for this Railway Budget. I request the hon. Minister to give more impotance to the demands raised by the Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu to fulfil the commitment given to the voters of Tamil Nadu.

So, again I request the hon. Railway Minister to implement the projects without any delay.

In general, we request him to provide more funds for MRTS, Chennai projects so that they are completed in the current year or at least in the next year. We find that the presenct allocation is insufficient. So, I request the hon. Minister to implement all the announced new railway lines, conversions, electrification and surveys in a timeframe manner, especially for Tamil Nadu. I also request him to allocate full financial assistance to complete the pending projects in time.

The work of new trains from Madurai as well as between Coimbatore and Bangalore and whatever has been announced by the hon. Minister, should be executed without any delay.

We request that the frequency of Chennai-Delhi bound Rajdhani Express should be increased. It should be run at least four days a week.

The hon. Minister of Railways had inaugurated the new railway line between Bangalore and Salem. At that juncture we had requested him for a Division at Salem. Now, we request him again to sanction it.

All the stations of Tamil Nadu are very important stations and they should all be provided with TV and STD facilities. They should also be provided with modernised good waiting rooms because the condition of the present rooms is not so good. So, I request him to take immediate steps in this regard.

Regarding my constituency, Sir, I am coming from a place which is the birth place of Rajaji. We have been requesting for a new railway line between Jolarpet-Hosur since the day of Independence. Many rulers came, many Governments came, and many elected Members came to this august House, but in spite of our long-standing demands, nobody has considered this line. So, I request the hon. Railway Minister to consider this line because Hasur is a important place where we have about 1,500 factories, 300 large and medium scales industries with a potential of Rs. 1,500 crore investment and one lakh working people.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI C. NARASIMHAN : Yes, Sir. I am just finishing.

We request the hon. Minister to provide the important railway overbridges across the national highways at Chennai and Bangalore near Natrampalli, Vaniyambadi and Ambar to avoid unnecessary traffic congestion. The people face lot of accidents there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The region is known to everybody. You just name those places.

SHRI C. NARASIMHAN : Yes, Sir.

We really need overbridges at these three points. We also need one overbridge at Samalpatti on the highway in Pondicherry to Bangalore.

I also request the hon. Minister to provide the railway production units in the backward areas to create job opportunities for the youth.

About the stoppage of trains at a number of places, we have been requesting for the past 10 months and here also once again we request him to consider the stoppages of trains at places like Rayakotta and Palacode in my constituency to help the lot of the public as well as business and industrial people.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank the hon. Railway Minister for the excellent Railway Budget. On behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu and 11 lakh voters of my constituency, I once again congratulate him and convey my immense faith in this Government.

With these words I conclude my speech. Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE (Mandla) : Mr. Chairman, sir, I rise to make some suggestions on railway budget and oppose it. I would like to say, through you, that hon'ble Railways Minister spoke a lot about Adivasi and backward classes. I represent Mandla Adivasi district of Madhy Pradesh. Perhaps he might have known that there is a metre gauge line in Mandla district since the British Government. Nothing has been thought about this line till date. I would like to furnish some information about it for the sake of knowledge of the Hon'ble Minister. Now he has made a provision for it. Jabalpur-Gondia line has been taken up for gauge conversion but it is not sufficient. Perhaps he may be aware that there is a big junction at Nainpur between Mandla, Nainpur Gondia and Jabalpur. Work is going on this junction for a long time but meeting has been done about it so far. There is no provision for it. I would like to submit that if he intends to do something for this Adivasi district, I would like to tell him that in the district of Mandla the population consists of 87 per cent Adivasis. There is a metre gauge line measuring. 47 kilometres from Nainpur. It is called Mandla Fort and links district headquarters. It has not been converted into broad gauge so far. Hence I insist that Nainpur and Gondia should be linked with district headquarters otherwise this metre gauge line would continue to be there that we got from Britishers. Nothing has been done for this district since independence. I know there are many problems facing the railways but I request that atleast this railway line should be converted so as to provide relief to the people of this area. People belonging to labour classes live in this area and thousands of them go outside in search of jobs. But there is no means of transportation for them. The hon. Minister might be aware that trains with very old coaches are running in this area. In this connection, I would like to cite an example that during the rainy season people travel in these trains with umbrellas. It is an irony for us. Perhaps, this point has been discussed in this House so far. I, therefore, request you time and again that since. You have taken up the work of Jabalpur-Godia line it would be better if Nainpur and Mandla are also included in it.

Secondly, I would like to say that the Hon. Minister of Railway has always protected the interest of Bihar and recently, a zonal headquarters of Railway has been set up there but there is a 45 km long narrow gauge line for district headquarter which has not been included for conversion.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : If I am not wrong Nainpur falls between Godia and Jabalpur.

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : But the rail line leading to district headquarters from Nainpur to Mandla in just 45 Km. long. Please, think about it. Secondly, you had proposed for a survey in this regard earlier. Several new lines have been considered for survey in the current Budget. I also, would like to suggest one rail line from Bilaspur to Jabalpur via Mangeli and Mandla. It is merely 350 Km long. At present, the trains have to cover a distance of 750 km. from Bilaspur because they come via Bina and Nagpur. If you connect Jabalpur, Mandla and Mungeli then this distance would reduce to 350 km. only. It would be better if survey work of this line is taken up. I know that a survey was conducted in 1984 but till now no information has been provided in this regard. If you go through the old recods, you would be able to know about that.

If this line is connected, it would benefit the local people. You have stated about the survey work of one more new rail line. You must be knowing that there is an old rail line connecting Nainpur. If Bilaspur-Pendara line is connected the distance would reduce to 100 km only. It would be a direct line connecting Bilaspur, Mandla, Nainpur and Nagpur directly. It should be taken seriously for survey. There are some small problems of my constituency.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please mention those problems only. There is no need to add explanatory note with them. Please mention the problems only because you have already consumed 10 minutes.

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Our problems are trivial. I would like to say one more thing. There is another narrow gauge line-Chindwada Shivani and Nainpur and there is only one train on this route. The same train makes to and fro journey. There is no other means of transport. It is an long route.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please, put your demands quickly, there is a shortage of time and everyone would like to speak.

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : I want to say that since we travel by train from Jabalpur to Delhi, therefore and arrangement for special direct train should be made for this purpose. Mahamaya Train comes from Nagpur and seven coaches are attached with it from Jabalpur and then some other coaches are attached to it at Bina. If some more coaches are added full fledged train can be introduced from jabalpur to Delhi and more people would get benefited.

You must be knowing that there is catering arrangement in this trains but unfortunately, there is no such arrangement in trains coming from our areas. This arrangement is available only in A.C. Second Class and not in general compartments. It would be better if the cattering facility is made availble for general compartment too.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would also like to say something about recruitment in Railway. You have stated that 1700 candidates belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe have been recruited. You deserve congratulation for it. I would like to state here for your information as well as for the information of the House that attention should also be paid to other parts of the

[Shri Faggan Singh Kuleste]

country. Sometimes, I fail to understand as to which areas, there recruited candidates belong and who exactly, they are? It seems that you have imposed certain limitation in this regard. I have received information that you have given priority to the candidates of some particular area. I want that poor people of other backward areas should also be provided an opportunity. The poor people will appreciate you for this favour.

In the end, I would like to say that the demand raised by me for gauge conversion should be considered seriously and should be included in the Budget.

SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA (Banswada) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I risk to support the Railway Budget. I would thank the Minister of Railway. Shri Ram Vilas Paswanji that he has ordered for the survey for railway line in the backward areas for the first time after the fifty years of Independence. This proposal was cleared eight months ago but the survey has not been conducted so far. I had also asked a question and in its reply, I was told that the survey would be completed by December. I request the hon. Minister that this survey should be conducted at the earliest and it may be included in the Railway Budget in the very current year so that the rail facility may be provided to the people of Tribal dominated areas of South Rajasthan who have not yet seen the train. They are very much eager to avail rail facility. Green marble and white marble are in abundance in Banswada. If Banswada is linked to rail line, it would also benefit the Union Government. I also want to request that the speed of Chetak Express running between Udaipur and Delhi may be increased. You have made provision in the Budget for gauge conversion for Chitorgar-Udaipur rail line, but this rail line is very important from strategic point of view. In case of war between Inaia and Pakistan it would be a very important line for going to Mumbai and other places.

Udaipur in Rajasthand is famous for lakes. Thousands of tourists come here every year. Even today, they have to face difficulty in going there. Therefore, the gauge conversion of Ajmer-Chitor rail line should be done at the earliest so that fast trains may be introduced from Delhi to Udaipur. It would also increase the influx of tourists.

01.00 hrs.

[SHRI P.C. CHACKO *in the Chair*]

There is Nathdwara Temple at Udaipur. Thousands of pilgrims come here from Gujarat and Mumbai. Frequent incidents of accidents accur on National Highway No. 8 and many persons die in them. Therefore, the Udaipur line should be extended upto Ahmedabad and linked with the broad gauge line. It is only 200 kilometre long stretch. If it is done, then would be direct rail line for going to Mumbai and Ahmedabad from Delhi. I would request the hon. Minister of Railway to include it in the forth coming Railway Budget. The speed of Chetak Express is still slow after so many years of Independece. It reaches Udaipur in ninteen hours after stopping at so many stations. Due to it the people of far away areas of Rajasthan avoid it whereas the people going to Ratlam reach there in 10-11 hours. I want to say that the hon. Minister has been making efforts for the development of backward areas. For the first time, I met him on July 19 and discuss the matter of development of backward areas and now he has approved it and made provision in the Budget. I would like to thank him for it. The reservation quota in the train going from Dungarpur to Mumbai and train going from Dungarpur to Delhi have been reduced. Earlier 3-4 seats were available from Dungarpur. Therefore, I would request you that the reservation of 12 seats be made available in the trains going from Dungarpur to Delhi and Delhi to Mumbai. It would be a boon for the backward areas. I have written about twenty letters in this regard but no reply was given as to what action has been taken. I urge upon you to make provision from the development of the backward areas. You have made provision for linking Udaipur and Chitorgarh in the Budget. I urge upon you to convert Ajmer to Chitorgarh line and Udaipur to Ahmedabad line into broad gauge line. The Members of Parliament have been demanding for this for the last fifty years. Demands have been made for conducting survey for this line many a times. The survey should be completed by August, 1997. Dungarpur-Ratlam via Banswada line should be linked with broad gauge line. It would benefit both the sides.

I support this Railway Budget and would like the Railway officers to cooperate fully in survey. I thank you for giving me an opportunity for expressing my views.

SHRI SATPAL MAHARJ : Hon'ble Members may give suggestions in regard to the stoppages to be avoided on this route so that journey to Udaipur may be completed in less time.

[English]

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lakhimpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak. I stand here to speak in support of the Budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. This Budget is for the poor and the common people. It has got a special singificance because it has attempted to remove the regional imblances in the country which is there for the last fifty years, since Independence. This Budget has empasised the importance of Railway as public welfare organisations instead of the commercial organisations. It is also committed for the improvement of the welfare measures and for the development of the backward region.

It has also emphasised the need for procurement of 26,000 wagons, more than 2,000 passenger coaches and more than 300 locos during this Budget period

without taxing the common passengers. That is the most significant part of this Budget and that is why, I stand here in support of this Budget. At the same time, emphasis has been given for the development of infrastructure which has not been given so far, during the last 50 years of Independence.

The figure of 53,596 KMs of railway line is what we had inherited from the British period and only 9304 KMs of railway line were added. That is the figure of 1995 which means that only 15 per cent of the original figure that has been added. The addition per year comes to only 200 KMs. This is the fate of the development of the railway system. The remote corners of the country could not be connected through the railway network.

I must congratulate the hon. Railway Minister and also the hon. Prime Minister who were bold enough to take strong decisions to include some projects for connecting some of the States like Jammu & Kashmir and parts of the North-Eastern Region which were not so far connected by the railway network.

Another importan point to be discussed here is this. installation of railway lines in the most isolated areas like Kerala, North-Eastern States, Jammu & Kashmir, is not commercially or enonomically viable. Due to this reason, these areas were under-developed. After inclusion of these Projects I think, it would contribute towards national integration and towards bringing isolated areas into the mainstream of the country.

In 1995, the country had 62,900 KMs of railway track out of which only 39,6121 KMs were of broad gauge. That constitutes only 63 per cent of the total railway track in the country. As regards the North-East, it had 1949 KMs of total railway track out of which only 468 KMs was of broad guage. That constitutes only 18 per cent. The present move to removing the regional imbalance is mostly welcome to the people of the North-East.

During the last 15 years, a lot of Projects were taken up for the North-East regarding gauge conversion and for construction of railway bridge over the River Brahmaputra. But no Budgetary allocation was made. A very meagre amount was allocated and that is why, all the Projects remain incomplete.

During the recent visit of the Prime Minister to the North-East, for the construction of a bridge over the River Brahmaputra at Jogighopa which was taken up 15 years ago, an allocation of Rs. 150 crore was announced from the current year's Budget. Due to this sincerity, I hope that there would be a lot of development in the North-Eastern Region and also in other backward regions of the country. There are many other regions which are still backward in different States.

I would like the hon. Railway Minister to emphasise one point. We are trying to include the Trans Asian Raiway network in our country. In that case, our request would be that the Norh-Eastern region should not be left out again. This Trans Asian line is going to come from Pakistan *via* Northern India to link Myanmar to connect the South East Asian countries. That is why, my request is to emhasise on the concerned authorities through the Railway Ministry to include the North-Eastern region for routing this Trans Railway Network.

Sir, North-East is a landlocked area. It is linked only through a single track from Coochbehar in West Bengal and doubling of this track is very important because before three years, the track was washed away by flood water and at that time, the entire area was disconnected from the railway communication system. That is why, doubling of this track from Guwahati to Calcutta is very important. I would request the Minister of Railways to consider this point.

I would also request him for the inclusion of a few points concerning the North-Eastern region. Firstly, Rajdhani Express which is now for only two days a week should be made a daily one. This Rajdhani Express covers passengers from UP, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim and other seven North-Eastern States. This should be made a daily train so that the pressure faced by the people who travel by Rajdhani Express would be avoided. It is not only the question of reservation but people have to wait to get the tickets also.

My second submission would be to instal a computer reservation centre with separate brainhead to cater to the needs of the reservation system of the entire North-Eastern region and if the North-Eastern States are going to instal computerised reservation system, it would be linked up to other parts of the country like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta. So, a separate computer reservation centre should be established immediately.

Then, I am graterful to the hon. Railway Minister for laying the foundation stone of Bogibeel Bridge over the Brahmaputra river three months back. But the survey work is to be expedited. It is because during floods, it was not possible to conduct survey work and since it is committed that the work would start from 1st April and completed within the Ninth Five Year Plan, it should be expedited.

Another promise was made by the hon. Railway Minister during his last visit to Assam for reintroduction of metre gauge services in Silghat-Chaparmuckh line and Moirabani-Chaparmukh line. I would request him to include this also.

Sir, as a gift of Chinese aggression in 1962, a line was installed in northern bank of Brahmaputra to cater to the needs of Arunachal Pradesh and a part of Northern Assam. But this line has been neglected during the last 30 years. And the only train which is running in that line takes more than 36 hours to cover a distance of 450 kilometres from Guwahati to Murkongchelek. Its service should be improved. There are other important points regarding passenger amenities, cleanliness and